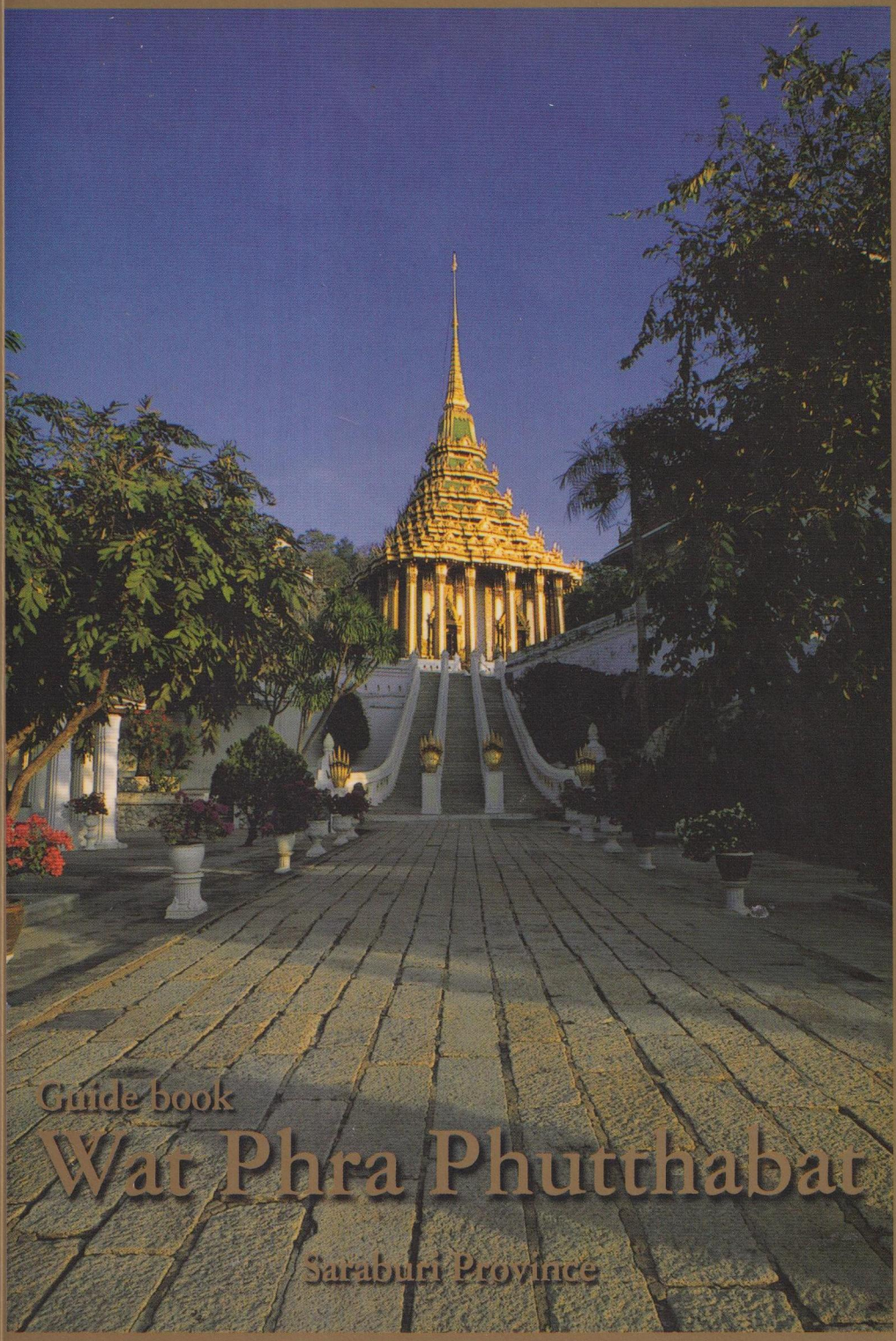


Guide book Wat Phra Phutthabat Saraburi Province

Guide book

Wat Phra Phutthabat

วัดพระพุทธบาท จังหวัดสระบุรี
พ.ศ.๒๑๖๗

ชัยมงคลวัดสระบุรี

Contents

Nine Facts about the Lord Buddha's Footprint	2-7
Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan	8-9
Life and Work of King Songtham of Ayutthaya	10-12
The Royal Memorial to King Songtham of Ayutthaya	13-14
Buddhists' Strong Faith in Paying Homage to the Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint	15-19
A Brief History of Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan	20-27
Places of Interest at Wat Phra Phutthabat	28-41
Objects of Worship and Art Objects	42-66
The District of Phra Phutthabat	67-69
Communities in the Neighbourhood of Wat Phra Phutthabat	70-71
Travel Tips for Wat Phra Phutthabat	72-73
Dos and Don'ts for Visitors	74-75

Wat Phra Phutthabat

The Temple of the Holy Relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint

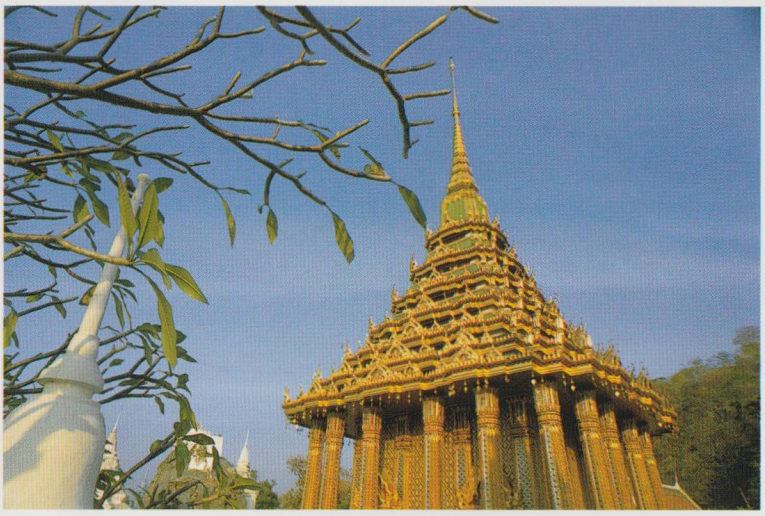
Nine Facts about the Lord Buddha's Footprint

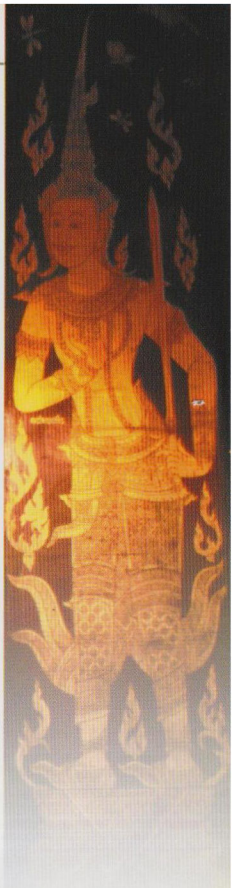
For centuries the holy relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint has been the site of worship for Buddhists of various races and nationalities, representing their deep and unshakeable faith through the years. This phenomenon can be attributed to the following features:

1. The Lord Buddha's Footprint is mentioned in the Sutra of the holy scriptures, the *Tripitaka*, which gives an account of events in the Lord Buddha's lifetime. Also, the annals of the Ayutthaya Period referred to the royal procession to the hill named Suwannabanphot, where the Lord Buddha's Footprint was located.

2. The Lord Buddha's Footprint was discovered in the reign of King Songtham, when Buddhism was firmly established and was at its highest point in the history of the Thai nation.

3. Almost all subsequent Thai kings of the Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin periods have made pilgrimages to the temple each year, following the tradition of the Thai monarch as the head and the supreme patron of the Buddhist faith, the foundation upon which Thai arts and culture and the people's lifestyle have been built.



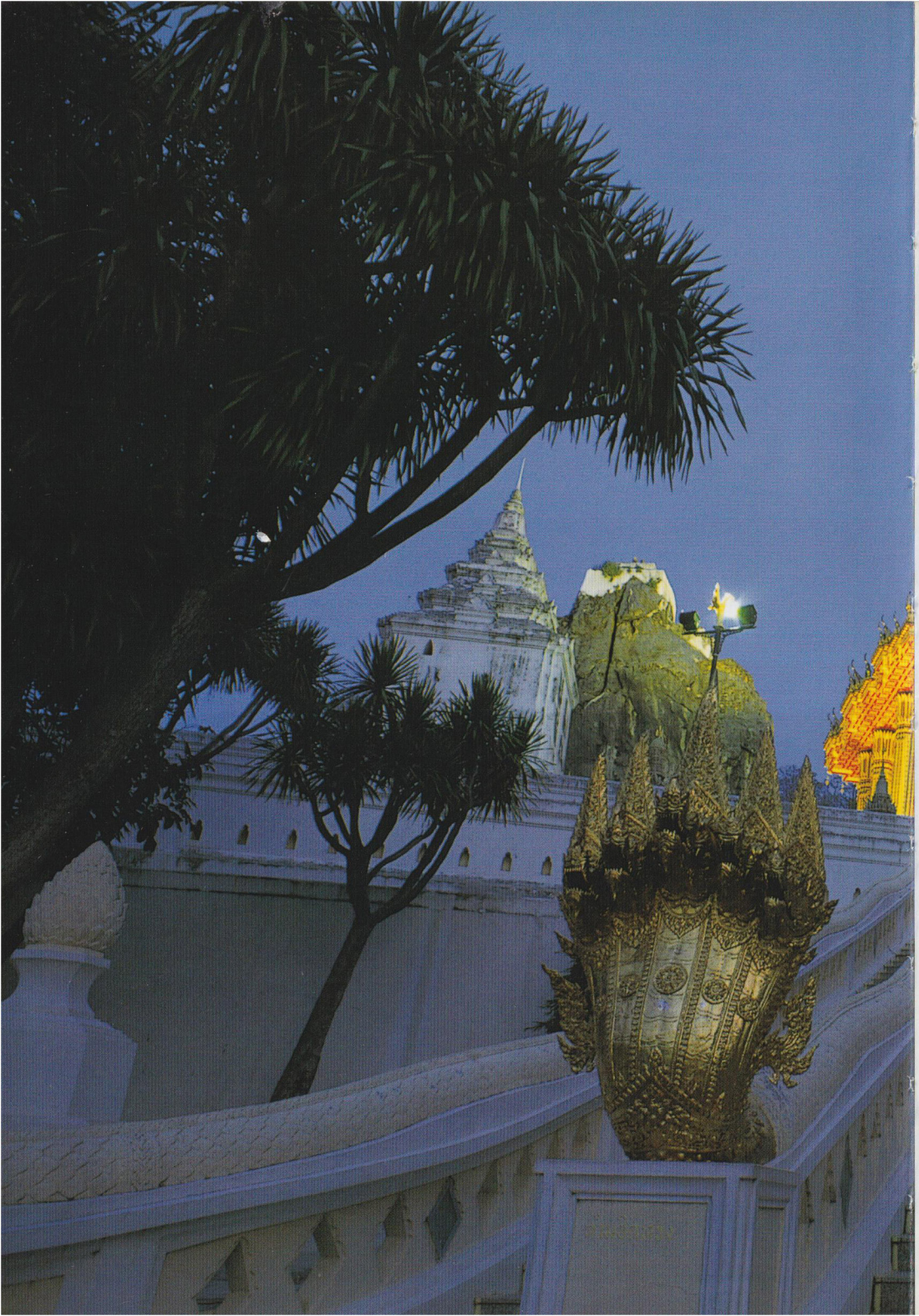


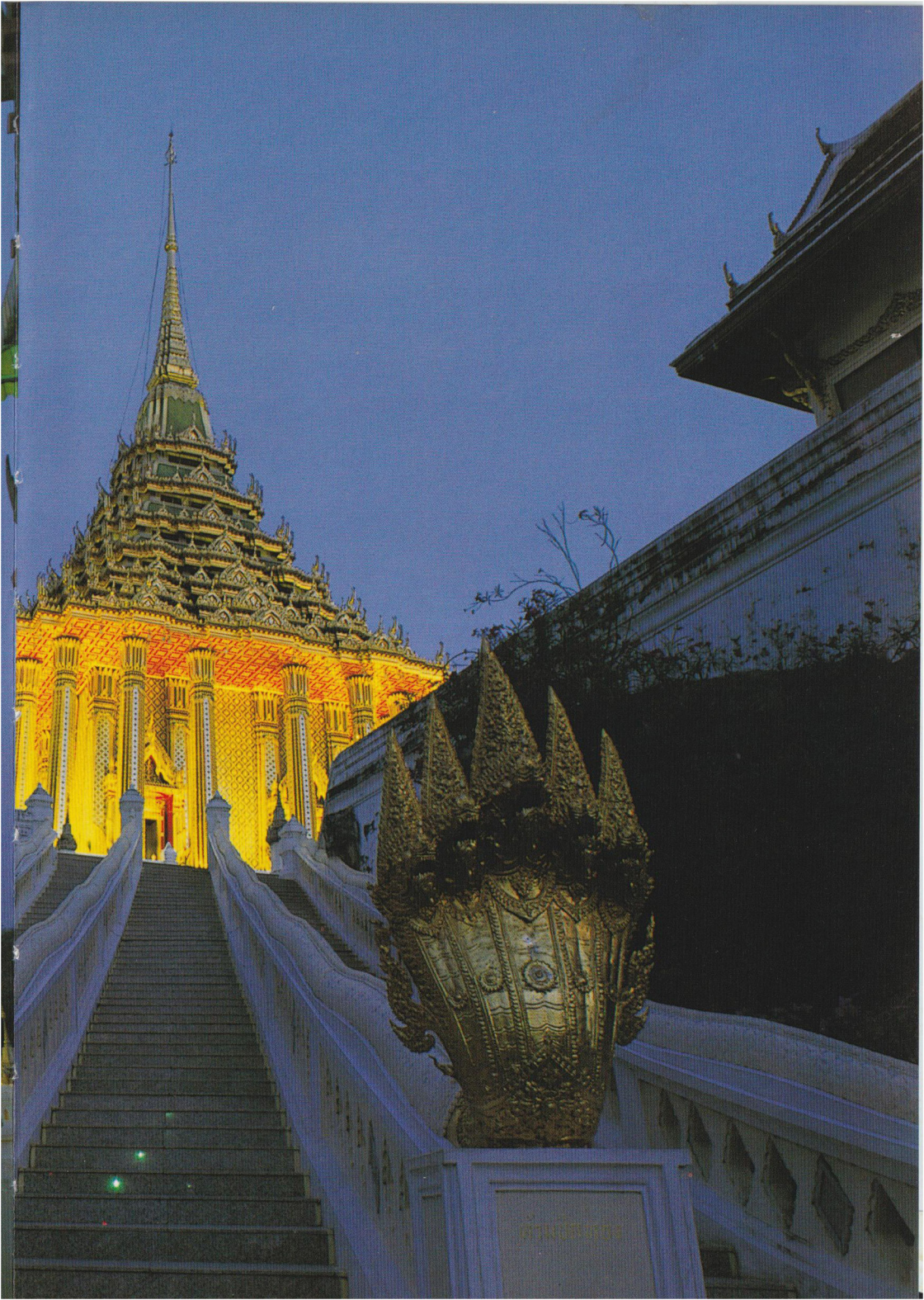
4. The Lord Buddha's Footprint was constantly referred to in the literary works of the Ayutthaya Period.

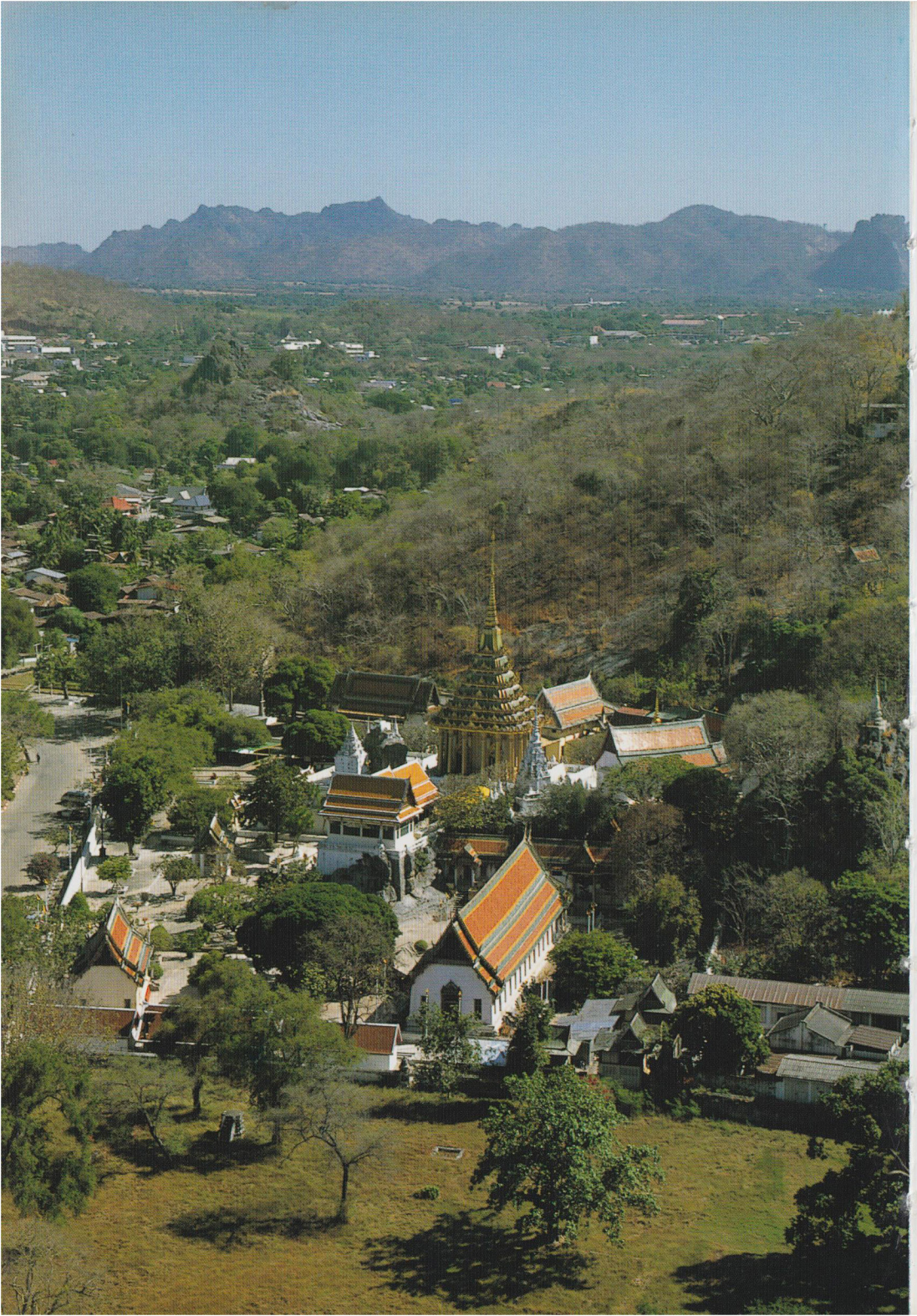
5. The state ceremonies of the Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin periods included those related to the Lord Buddha's Footprint, the water-borne royal procession, and the royal procession by land, as well as the celebrations set up for the occasion, including the long-weapon dance performed on elephant back by the monarch as a tribute to the shrine.

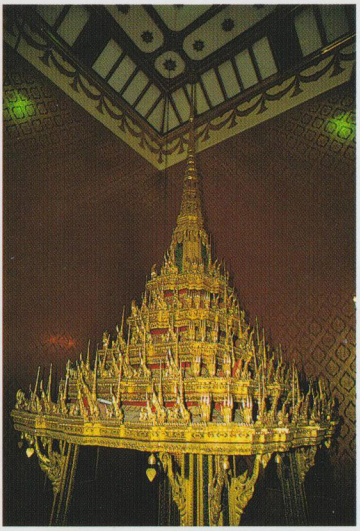
6. Superb structures have been built over the Lord Buddha's Footprint, with elaborate designs and decorations. Traces of old structures remain, such as the royal pavilion for the king to change clothes in, the 10-chamber temple hall, and the royal hall for the king.

7. The homage-paying ceremony at the Temple of the Holy Relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint has been institutionalised as a traditional annual ceremony for the people through the centuries.



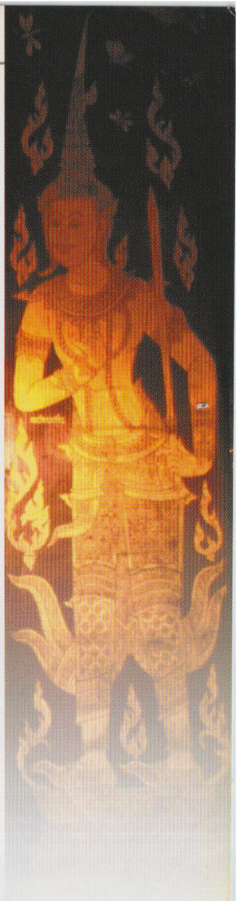


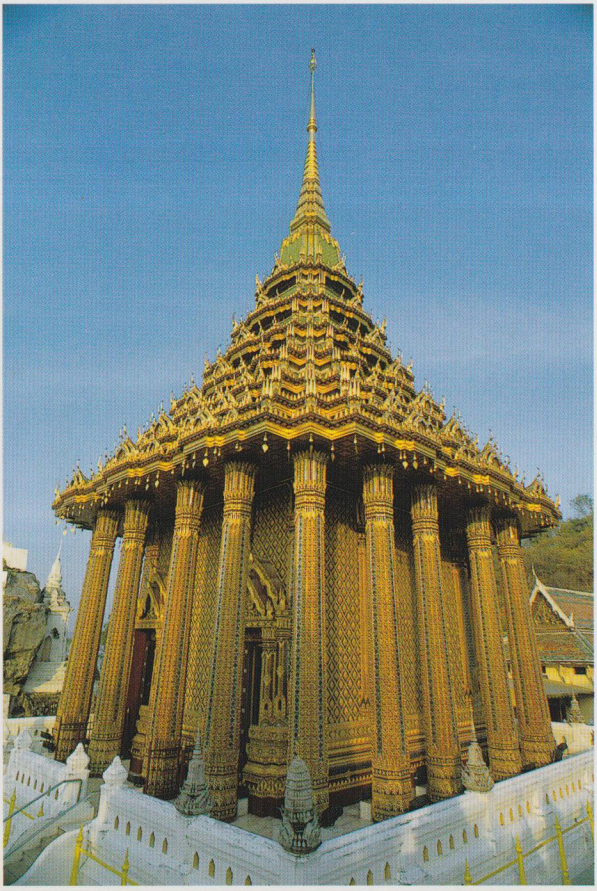


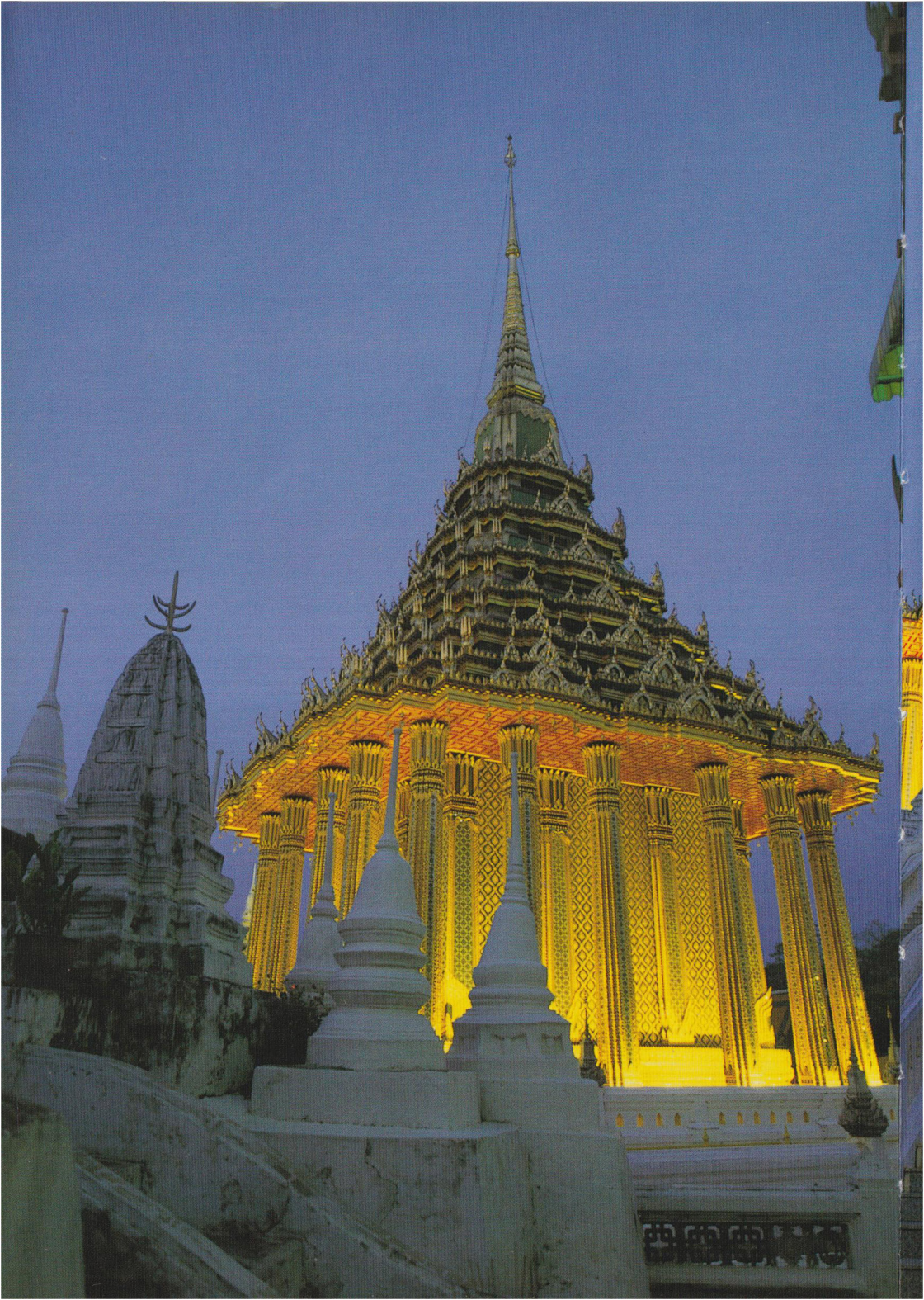


8. The shrine has been publicized on a wide scale, so that it is now known among Buddhists and non-Buddhists in all parts of the world. They harbour no doubts about the shrine's authenticity.

9. As a sacred shrine, the temple has been constructed with great care and maintained at its best over the centuries.







Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan

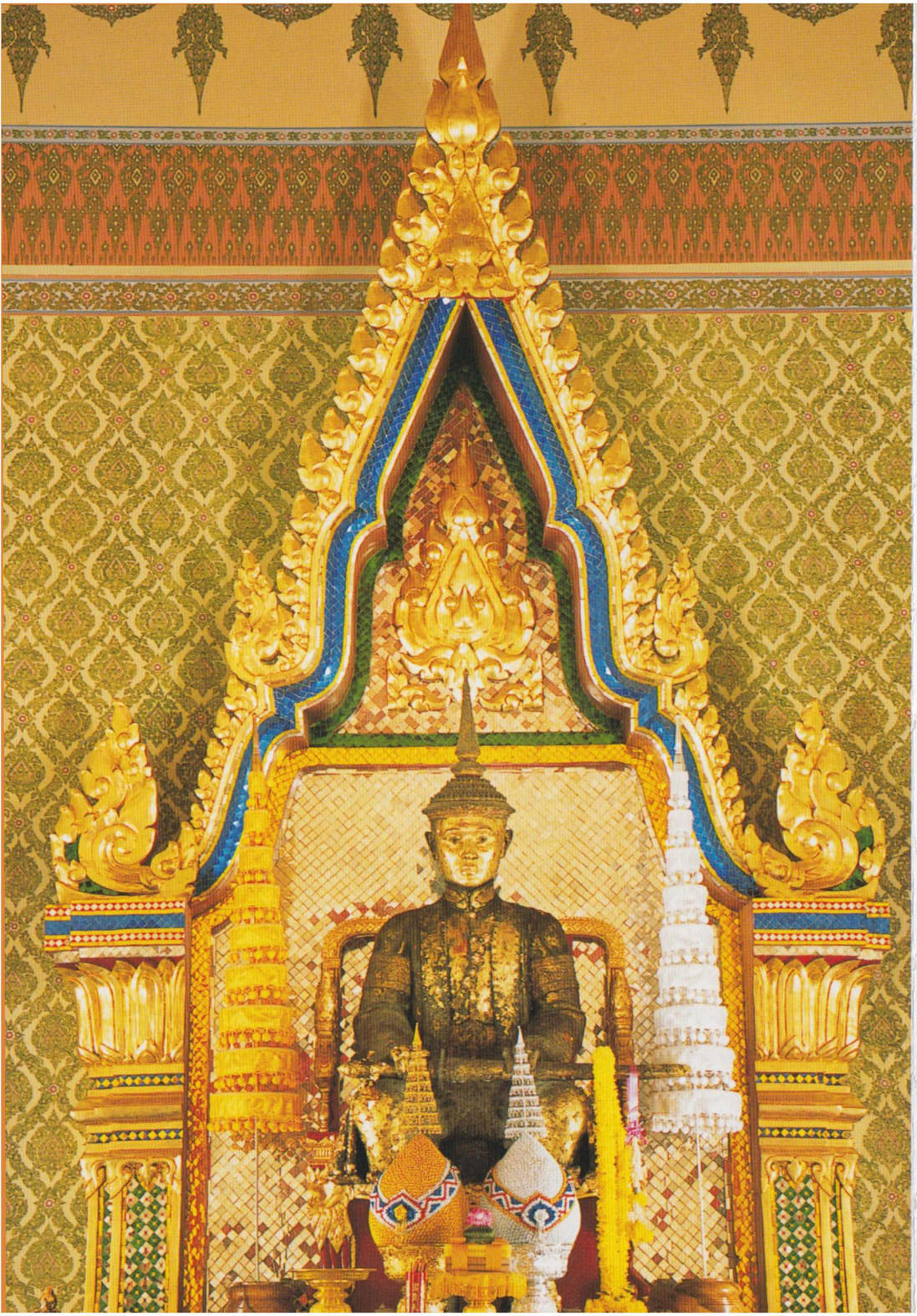
Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan is situated at Khun Khlon Subdistrict, Phra Phutthabat District, Saraburi Province. It is a true repository of national treasure and Buddhist edifices, a gem of Thai art and culture, representing genuine Thai wisdom.

Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan, a special royal temple of the first grade, was first built in the Ayutthaya Period in the reign of King Songtham in the year 1624.

The Lord Buddha's Footprint, the most sacred object of worship for Buddhists, is the focal point of the shrine.

The most distinctive building is the *phra mondop*, a spire-topped structure built over the Lord Buddha's Footprint. It is on a square base, one of the finest architectural forms found in Thailand.

There are numerous structures and objects to be studied in detail at Wat Phra Phutthabat. For this reason, some volunteers formed themselves into a group of guides, welcoming visitors and explaining in detail the treasures they are so proud of.



Life and Work of King Songtham of Ayutthaya

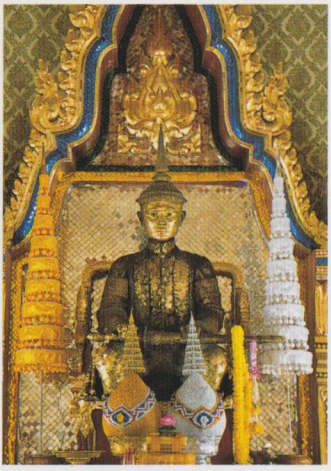
King Songtham was born in 1591. His original name was Prince Intraraja (also known as King Intraraja of the White Elephant).

The sources of information on his life are a hand-written record

attributed to an Ayutthaya king (the annals of Ayutthaya, Luang Prasert's version), the *Testimony of a Prince Monk*, the *Journal of Van Vliet*, and the Palace Law.

It is believed that King Songtham was a descendant of King Naresuan the Great. He ascended the throne in 1620 and passed away at the age of 37 in the year 1628. However, a document in the Dutch language in the National Library of the Netherlands stated that King Songtham ruled the kingdom for 19 years.

Royal activities



1. King Songtham was a great Buddhist scholar, well versed in the holy scriptures. Annals of the Ayutthaya Period called him Phra Trailokanart, a righteous king and a pious Buddhist, both as a theorist and a practicing follower of the faith. He assembled Buddhist scholars at his court and had the holy books compiled. A book on the lives of the Buddha, *The Great Life* – or *Mahajati Jataka* – was completed in his reign.

2. King Songtham initiated the construction of the Temple of the Holy Relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint, as a great and unique shrine for all the people, resplendent with religious symbols and cultural heritages of the Thai people. He deserved to be named the Great Patron of Buddhism and of the Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint.

3. King Songtham was not a warrior, but a sage and a Buddhist scholar who devoted his life to the promotion of Buddhist teachings and the propagation of Buddhism. He also set himself as a model for all Thai Buddhists.

4. As a monarch, King Songtham was just and fair. He supported meritorious and knowledgeable persons and enabled them to serve the kingdom, and he even extended his welcome to foreigners who were residents of his kingdom. Relations with Japan and the Netherlands were emphasized. He was also known as a Bhotisattava – a future Buddha. He earned great respect in neighbouring countries, resulting in a lull in the wars of aggression that frequently took place in those times.

The Royal Memorial to King Songtham of Ayutthaya

The Venerable Somdet Phra Phutthacharn, Nuam Buddhasaro, of Wat Anongkharam, who supervised the shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint in the reign of King Vajiravudh, Rama VI, considered King Songtham, during whose reign the footprint was discovered and the elaborate hilltop shrine was built, as a great and benevolent monarch with special links to the shrine. Therefore, a memorial to King Songtham was built for people to pay homage to him.

The four-sided Thai pavilion houses a bronze figure of King Songtham, in sitting position, feet on the ground, holding a sword in one hand; the sword is lying across his lap.

The structure is 4.50 by 9.25 metres, and 7 metres tall. The Thai-style roof is fully decorated. A total budget of 373,016 baht was used for the construction.

On 6 June 1960, a ceremony was held, in which the spirit of King Songtham was invoked to reside in the figure. On that day, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej proceeded from Bangkok to the Temple of the Holy Relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint to inaugurate the memorial.

The Temple of the Holy Relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint and all the people of Saraburi welcome all worshippers of the shrine to pay respect to King Songtham, who initiated the construction of the holy shrine.

Buddhists' Strong Faith in Paying Homage to the Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint

In the past, no other festival or merit-making ceremony rivalled the annual paying of homage to the Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint.

In the dry season, around the middle of the third to the middle of the fourth lunar month, people from all over the country arrived and went up the hill to pay respect to the shrine (Satchaphanthakhiri Hill, also called Suwannabanphot Hill). The special imprint was believed to have been left by the Lord Buddha for his followers to commemorate after he was gone.

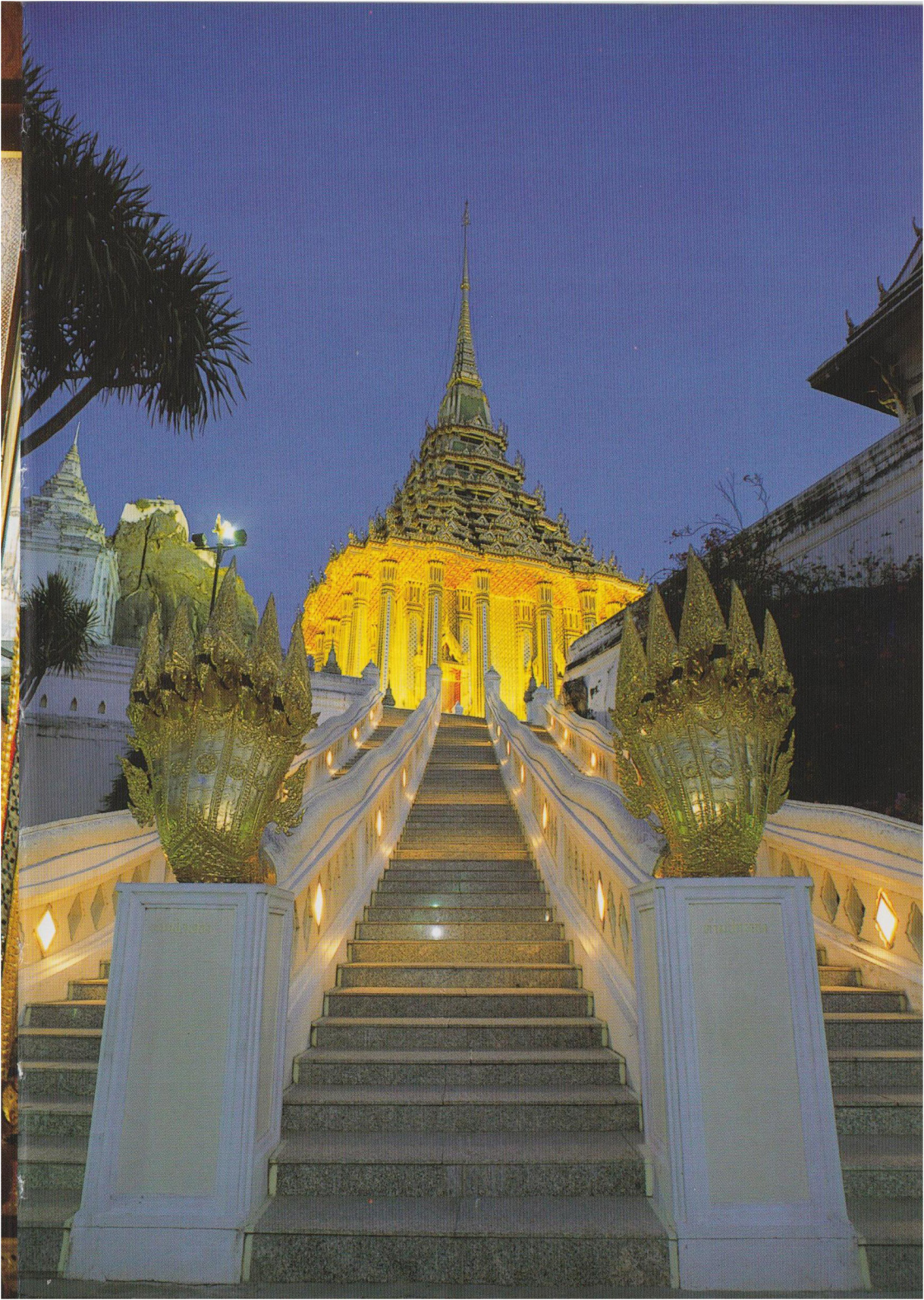
Several centuries ago, it was a serious task to prepare for the pilgrimage to the shrine, leaving other commitments behind. Sufficient funds and foodstuffs for the long journey had to be prepared. Transport was difficult. A great number of pilgrims failed to arrive at the shrine, and some had no opportunity to try to visit the place again. What is more, the area was infested with diseases, and the caravans were often robbed or plundered along the route. Bullock carts and elephants then had to be hired for the purpose.

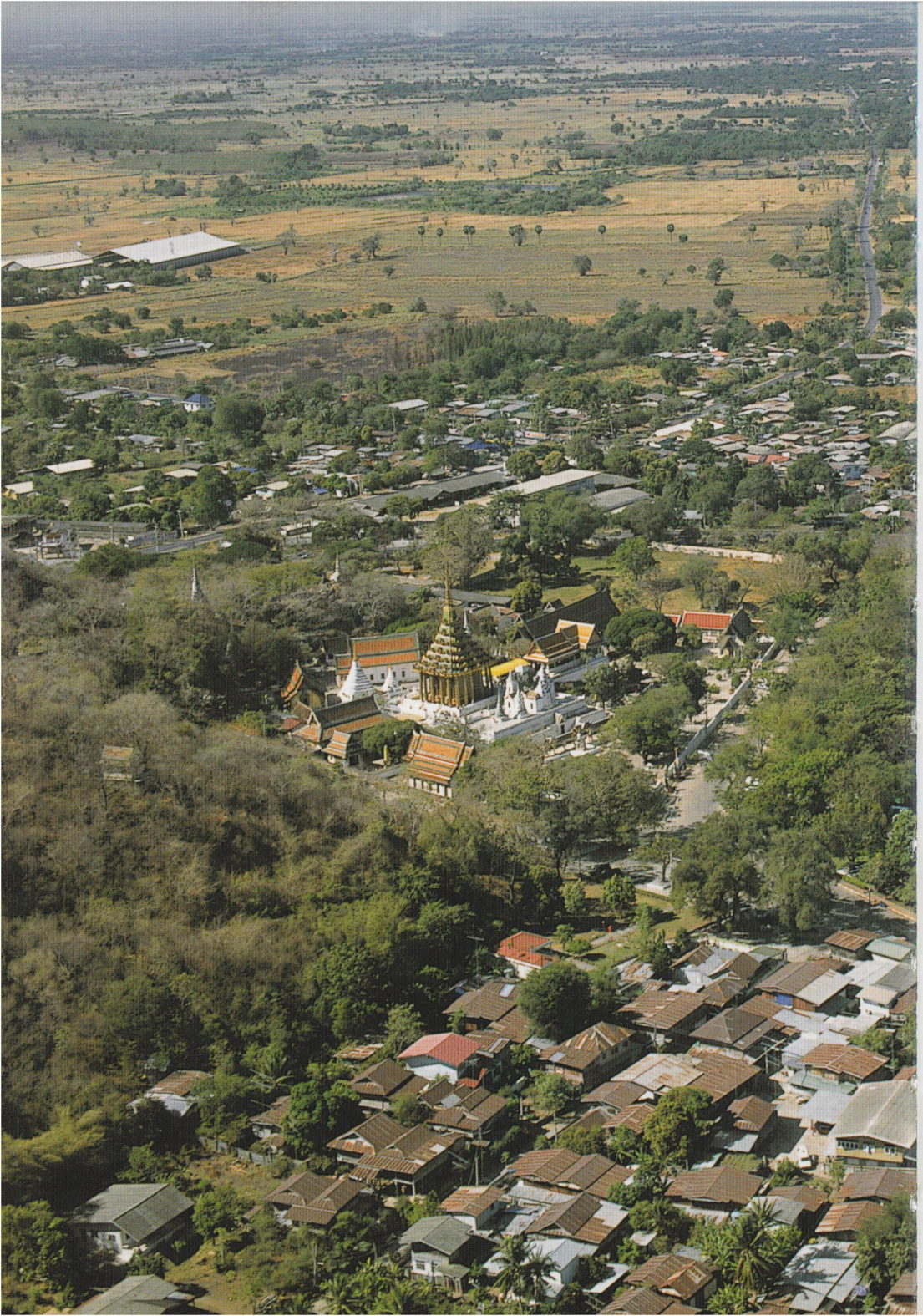
The devotees who were fortunate enough to finally arrive at the shrine were often overwhelmed by their feat. They prayed to the shrine, and

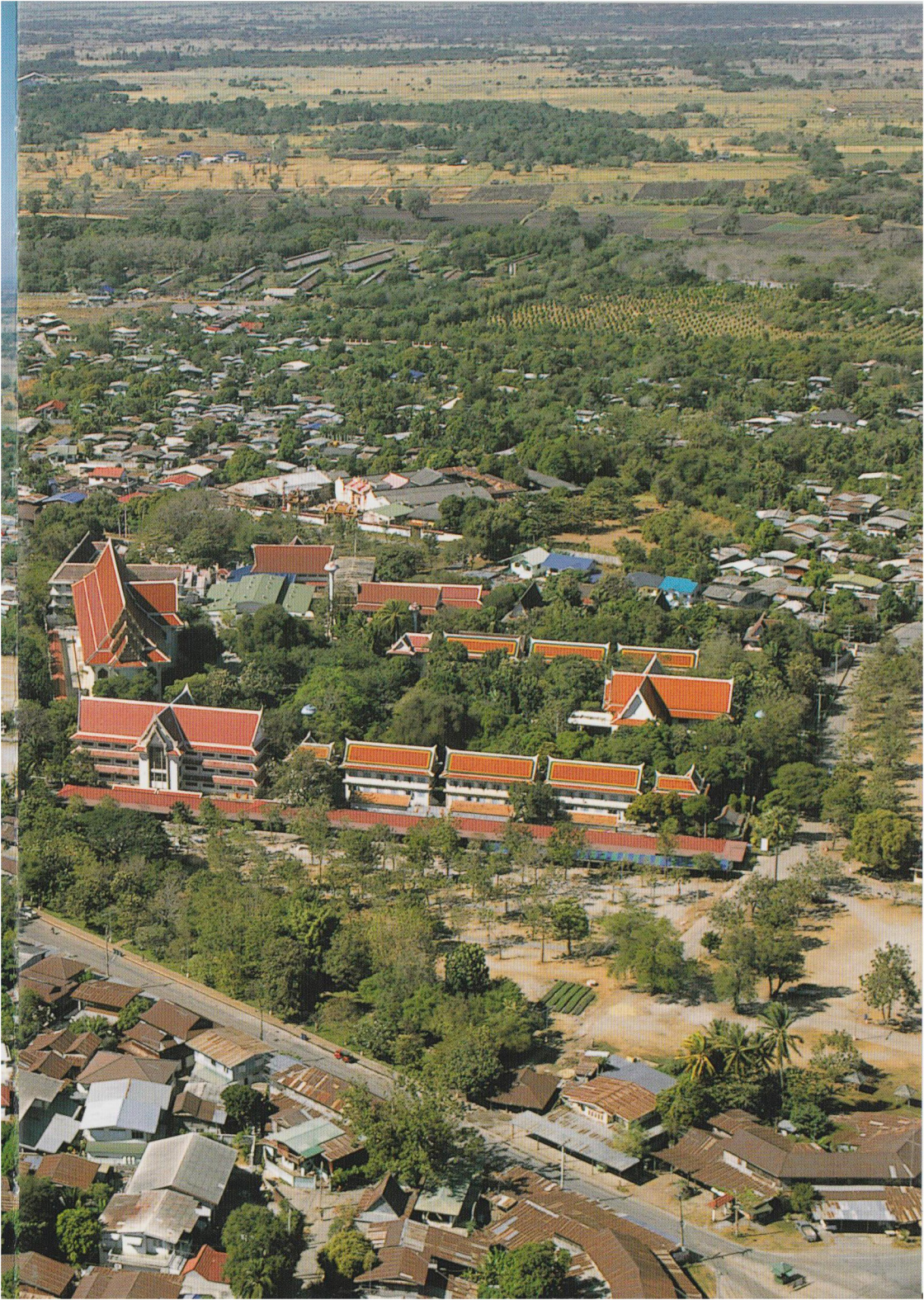
rang the bells around the place in the hope of announcing to heavenly beings their great achievement and the sacrifices they had borne. Alms were then given to the poor. It has long been a belief deeply held by Buddhists that anyone who visited the Lord Buddha's Footprint three times would be guaranteed a place in heaven after their death. Great efforts were therefore made by devotees to reach the shrine. Once there, they would spend several days at the shrine.

A description by the great poet Sunthorn Phu referred to his visit to the shrine in the entourage of King Rama II. He paid deep tribute to the shrine and made a wish, in full realization of his great fortune to have encountered the holy relic. In his account, he went on to say that, after making his tribute, he took leave of the royal entourage to visit mountains and caves in the neighbourhood. Before they returned, members of the entourage purchased delicacies and unique products of the area as souvenirs for their friends and families back home.

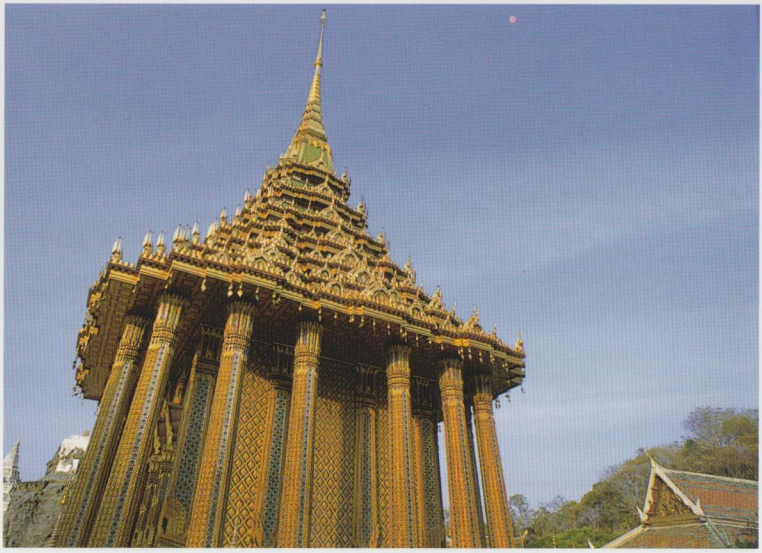
Sunthorn Phu described the festival at Wat Phra Phutthabat over a century ago as filled with activities, noises, and lively scenes, with musical and stage performances of all sorts.





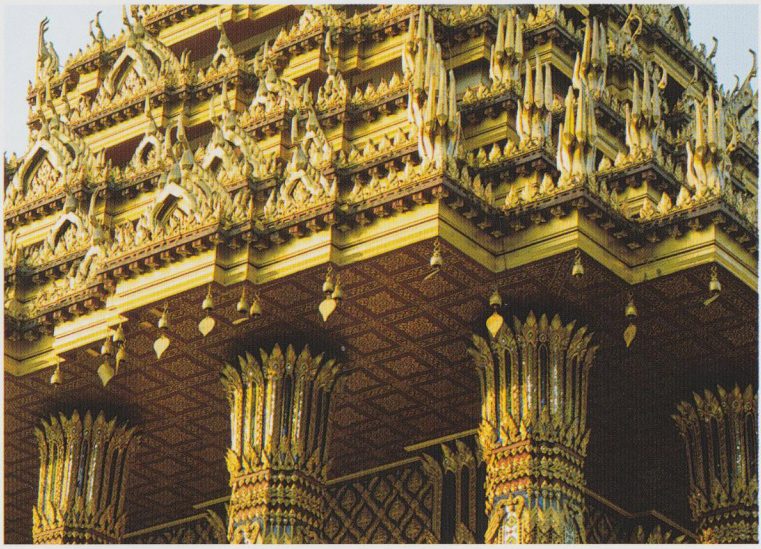


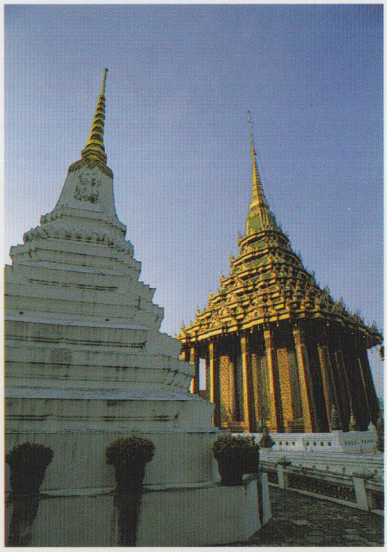
A Brief History of Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan



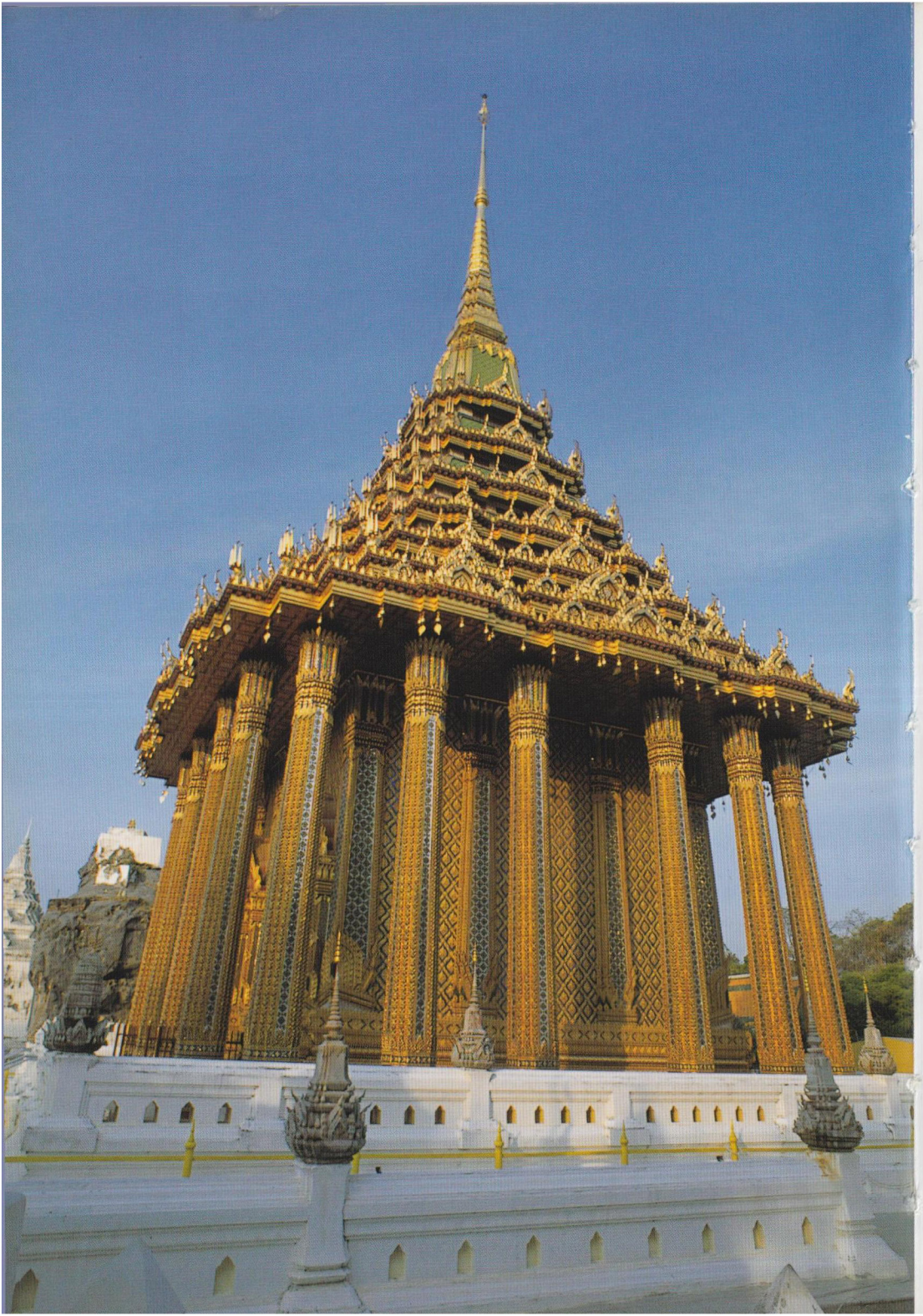
Saraburi Province, the site of the holy relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint, first appeared in the annals of the Ayutthaya Period around 1549, in the reign of King Maha Chakrapat, the 16th monarch of Ayutthaya, about 450 years ago. Saraburi has since become the repository of part of Thailand's religious heritage, Buddhist art forms, and local wisdom for later generations to study, appreciate, and take pride in. Buddhism has long been the basis of Thai life and social harmony, up to the present.

The official name of Wat Phra Phutthabat is Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan, a special royal temple of the first category. It was built during the Ayutthaya Period in 1624 by King Songtham. King Songtham erected a small building over the Footprint as a temporary structure on his first encounter with the holy relic. Back in Ayutthaya, he moved to declare the site a major monument, so he ordered that a *mondop* with a palace-style roof be built over the Footprint. A temple was also built, so that monks and novices could take care of the site permanently. This royal temple is situated in Khun Khlon Subdistrict of Phra Phutthabat District. It belongs to the Maha Nikaya,

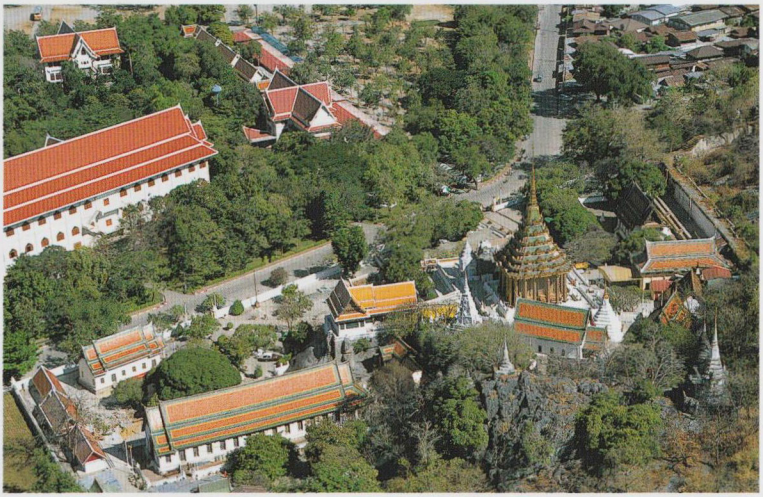




the Great Path Sect, with a total area of about 2,800 acres. The central temple area measures 250 metres in length and 150 metres in width. To the north, there are walls and a mountain range as the border, temple walls and Pho Lanka Hill to the south, and the walls of the ancient Thai Phikun Palace to the west.

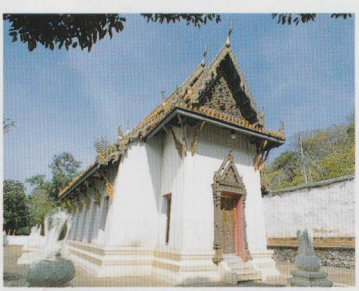


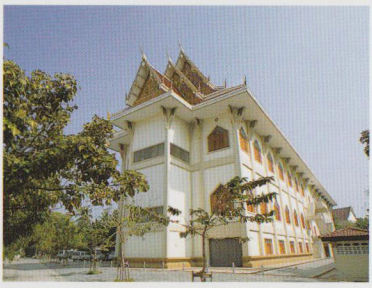
The temple areas



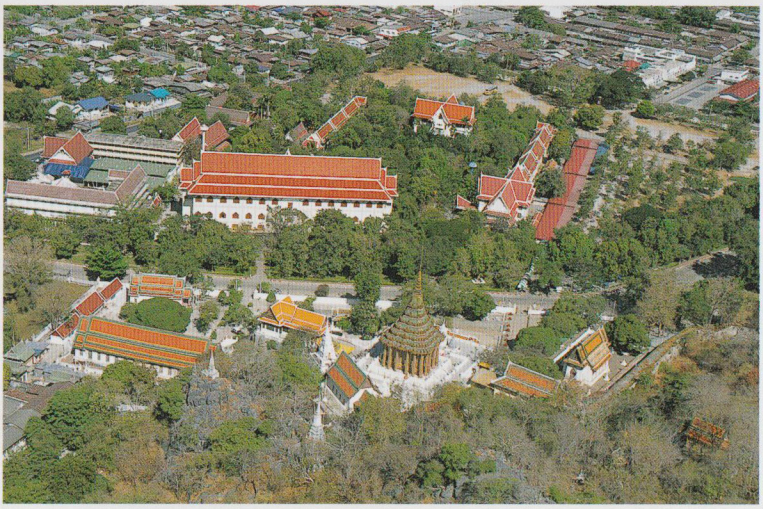
Wat Phra Phutthabat comprises religious treasures, objects of worship, and a holy site and monuments, in three categories:

1. The Buddhavat: Buddha's temple, comprising the Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint, the Assembly Hall, the Vihan (temple hall) of Pa Lelai, the Vihan of Four Footprints, the Museum of the Shrine, and the Lower Vihan of Treasure (Chinese style), among others.





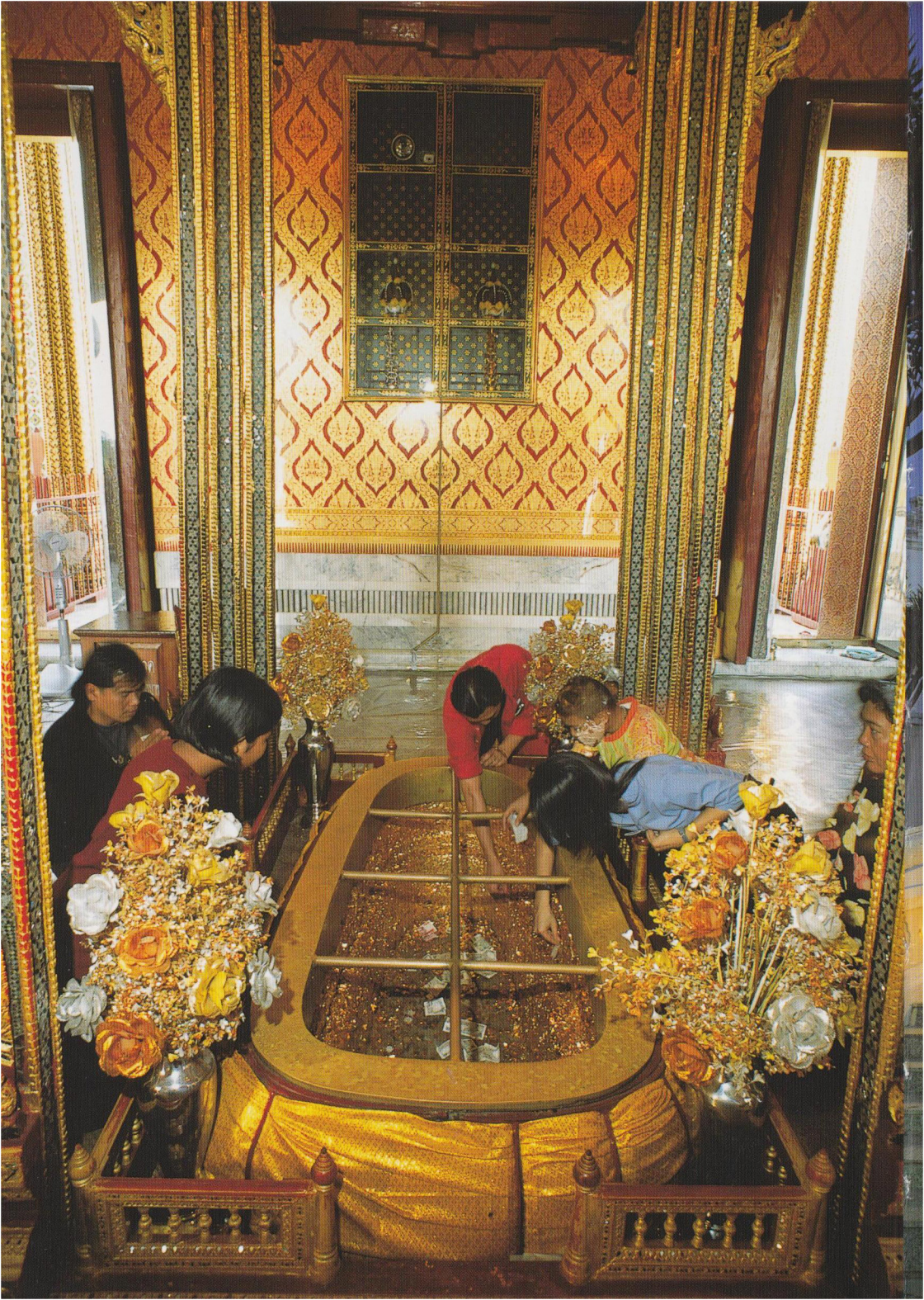
2. The Sanghavat: The Sangha temple, comprising residences of the monks, an auditorium, classrooms, a Buddhist school, a notary office, and the vegetarian kitchen of the temple.



3. Main temple area: When King Songtham established the holy shrine, he granted to the temple a huge area around the shrine, about 16 kilometres in all directions. The temple area was been redefined by an executive decree of 1936, as stated by the Department of Lands on 29 May 1955, covering about 2,800 acres, including the site of the holy shrine. An allocated area is in the process of changing the land titles for public use.

The temple's income is drawn from three sources:

1. From the lease of land allowed for residential and agricultural areas
2. From public donations
3. From festivals, such as the annual festival to pay homage to the Lord Buddha's Footprint



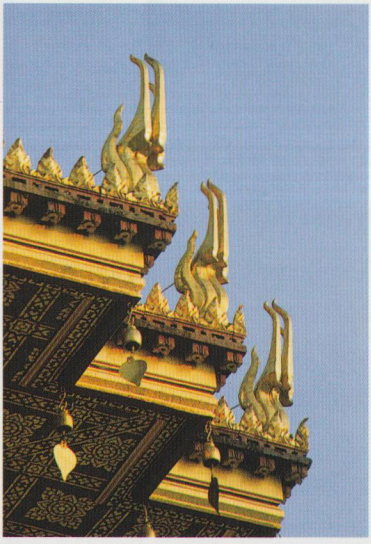
Places of Interest at Wat Phra Phutthabat

All structures and objects within the Temple of the Holy Relic of the Lord Buddha's Footprint were superbly made and carefully selected for the sacred shrine. From the time of King Songtham, when the shrine was built, works of art and fine craftsmanship have accumulated at the shrine, through construction, reconstruction, and renovation. Wat Phra Phutthabat remains one of the best examples of Thai religious architecture.

1. The Lord Buddha's Footprint

The Footprint, enshrined in a *phra mondop*, a square structure with a palace-style roof, measures 53 centimetres in width, 152 in length, and 28 in depth. A raised dais was built as an enclosure, with a palatial structure atop the shrine. The shrine is believed to be the Lord Buddha's memorial, one among the five footprints left by the Lord Buddha for his followers. The shrine is thus recognized by Buddhists in and outside Thailand as a holy place. The Footprint features patterns mentioned in the holy scriptures, the *Tripitaka*, as the unique features of the Lord Buddha.

2. The *phra mondop*



The main structure that was built over the Lord Buddha's Footprint is a *phra mondop*, a square building in brick and stucco with a graceful and elaborately decorated roof in the style of a palace roof. All traditional palace roof decorations, such as finials, ridges, niches, and decorative panels, can be found. The style is similar to work found in the Palace of the Viceroy in the early Bangkok Period, similar to the roof of the Phuthaisawan Throne Hall and the group of royal buildings in the area that is now the National Museum of Bangkok.

The Construction and Renovation of the Holy Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint

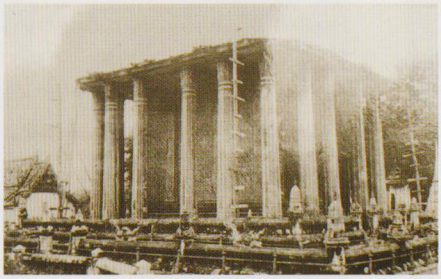
The structure was first built as a building with a palatial roof at the command of King Songtham, who also had the temple hall, the assembly hall, and other structures built. Foreigners were hired to construct a thoroughfare, about 8 metres wide, leading to the shrine, utilizing a surveyor's scope. King Songtham took the route to the port where he started his river journey back to Ayutthaya. A royal hall built to the east of the port was named the Chao Sanuk Royal Hall – The Hall of Royal Delight.

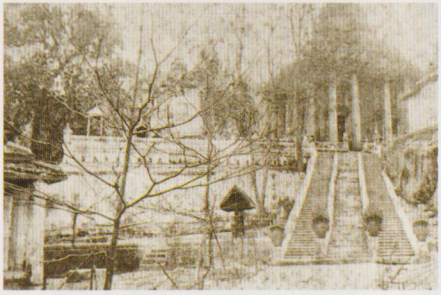
King Prasatthong commanded that work be done at Than Thongdaeng Stream for the royal party's outing and that a royal residence built at the site for the royal pilgrimage to the holy shrine. The structures put up at the shrine at the command of King Prasatthong are the large temple hall and the marble wall built around the *phra mondop.*

In the reign of King Narai the Great, a road was built from Lop Buri to Suwannabanphot Hill where the holy shrine was located. A reservoir was built and named Ang Kaew, with check dams built on the slope of the hill.

The reconstruction of the shrine took place for the first time in the reign of King Suriyendrathibodi, known as King Tiger (1703-1708). The roof of the *mondop* was modified and made into five spires.

The structure in King Tiger's reign thus resembled the Sivalai Throne Hall in the Grand Palace, as a large open hall and side halls with corresponding columns, supporting the five-spire roof.





King Phumintrabodi, or King Thaisa, had a large mirror from the Narai Rajanivet Palace installed inside the structure, framed by carved and gilded patterns on plaster. The original structure featured alcoves on all sides. It was assumed that it was built in King Songtham's reign as an open hall, with the alcoves built in later reconstruction in the reign of King Maha Thammaraja II, or King

Borommakot (1732-1758). King Borommakot presented an auspicious elephant figure as a tribute to the shrine, and had eight door panels made, inlaid with mother-of-pearl. They are recognized as the finest such door panels of the period.

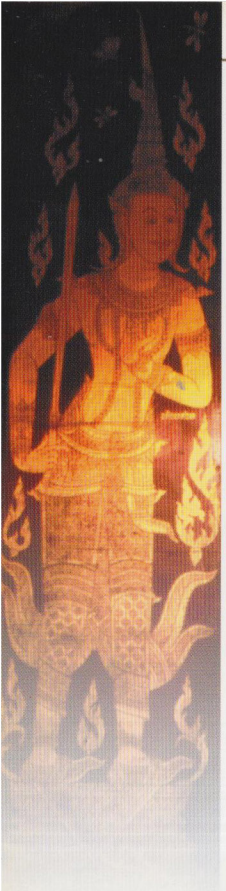
In the reign of King Ekathat, the last monarch of Ayutthaya (1758-1768), as the Burmese troops laid siege to Ayutthaya in 1759, a gang of Chinese descent, based at Suan Phlu Canal, went up the Phra Phutthabat Shrine and looted the place, stripping the gold and silver plates and setting fire to the shrine.

King Taksin the Great, who restored the country's independence, was preoccupied with wars and the rebuilding of the nation, so he did not make a pilgrimage to the shrine, but had a temporary tile roof built over the sacred shrine. Phraya Rajasonggram, a trusted warlord, was entrusted with the task, with elaborate woodworking planned. The undertaking was not yet finished when the reign of King Taksin came to an end.

King Rama I, King Phutthayodfa Chulalok the Great, who established the Chakri Dynasty and made Bangkok the royal capital, entrusted his viceroy to undertake the reconstruction of the shrine.

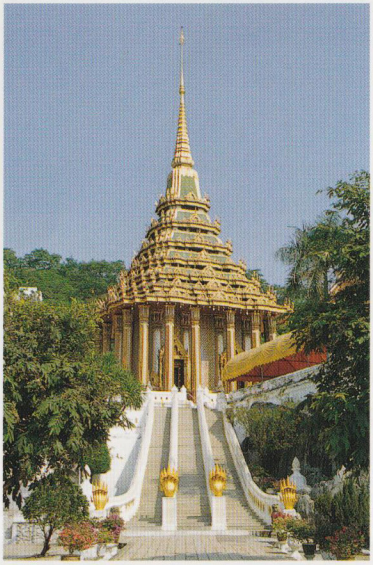
King Rama II, his successor, had a palace-style top built over the shrine.

In the Third Reign, a fire broke out, destroying the palace top of the *mondop*. A new one was created, with the gilding of the inner wall of the structure, painted red since the First Reign.



King Mongkut, Rama IV, had the top raised, with a holy relic of the Lord Buddha enshrined.

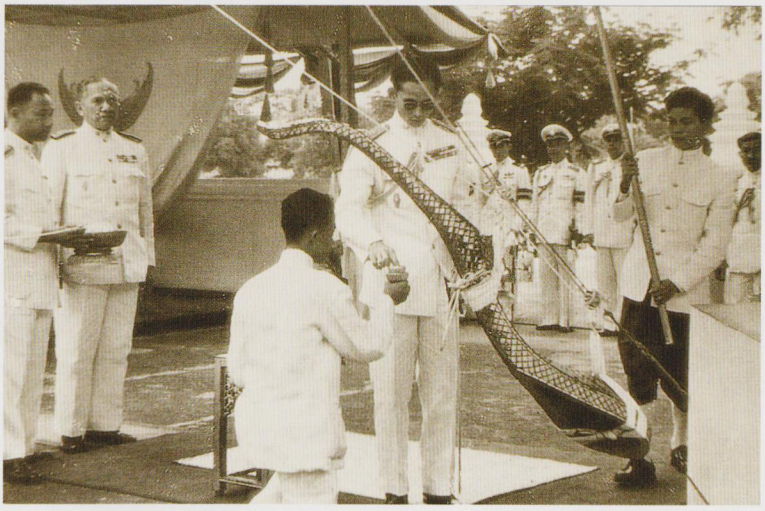
King Chulalongkorn, Rama V, paid deep tribute to the shrine, performing a war dance on elephant back. He also had the inner walls repaired, and repainted the patterns. Another Naga staircase was added to the original two, complete with bronze serpent heads.



Towards the end of the reign, the wooden decorations on the roof were in decay. King Rama V appointed a senior monk, the Venerable Phra Mongkol Thipmuni, as the head of the team to renovate the shrine. The task remained uncompleted, however, when the king passed away.

King Vajiravudh, Rama VI, was able to carry the task to completion.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX, had the new top raised, and made the *phra mondop* a ferroconcrete structure. The entire structure was renovated. On 9 March 1952, he paid a tribute to the shrine at the Sunset Royal Hall and spoke of King Songtham:



"The Lord Buddha's Footprint was discovered in the reign of King Songtham of Ayutthaya, who had the palace top and corresponding structures built. The shrine has been the focus of Buddhist faith and respect since that time. Subsequent Thai monarchs have paid tribute to and renovated the shrine as the most sacred monument of Thailand. The strong faith of King Songtham, who put great efforts into this shrine, is remarkable and highly laudable."

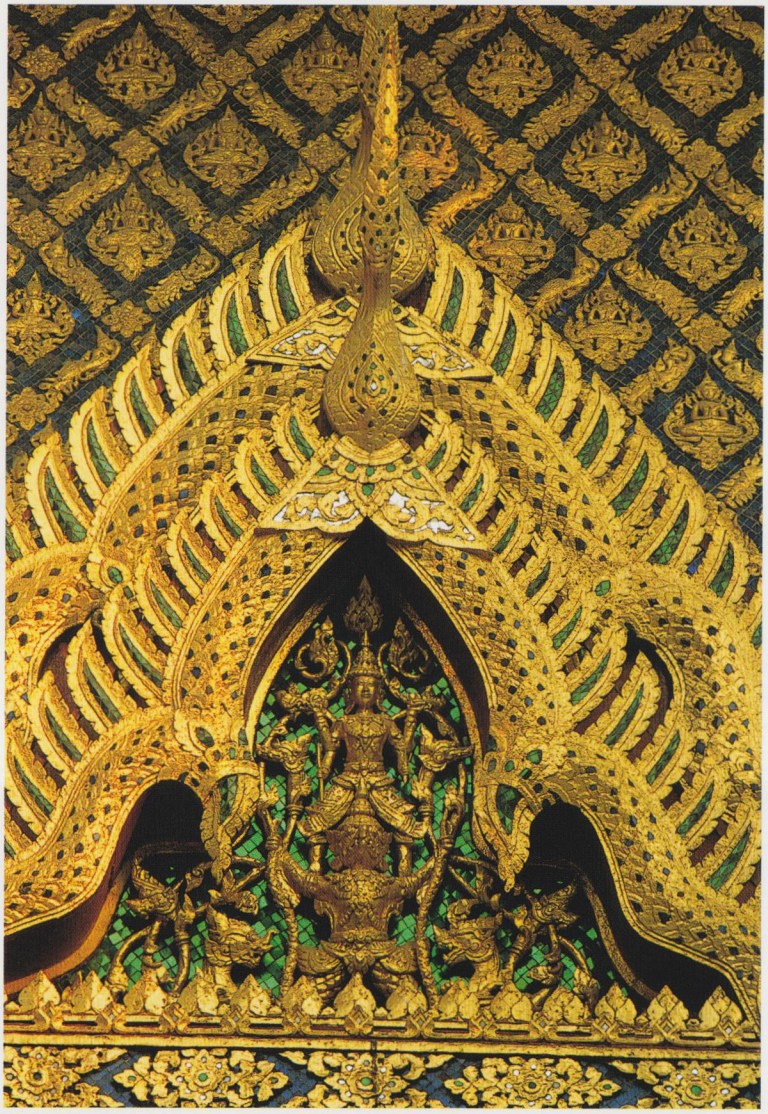
3. The *busabok*

A *busabok* – a roofed enclosure modelled after a fine palace building, open on all sides, with a square base and four supporting pillars elaborately decorated – was built inside the *mondop*, over the Lord Buddha's Footprint. Silver mats are laid around the shrine. The roof of the *busabok* is fully decorated in traditional Thai decorative art.

4. Mother-of-pearl door panels

The original door panels were built in the reign of King Songtham. Their beauty cannot be fully described, as they were burnt up entirely in the year 1766, one year before the fall of Ayutthaya. The door panels seen at present were made in the reign of King Rama I of Bangkok. They feature heavenly beings paying respect, surrounded by elaborate flowery patterns, lacquered and gilded. Both parts resemble works found in the Palace of the Viceroy, at Wat Chanasongkhram, Bang Lamphu, in Bangkok.

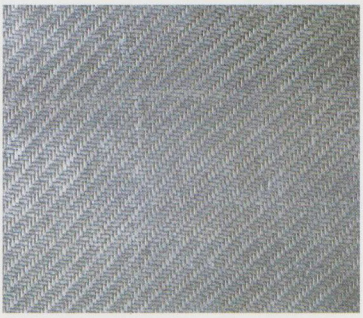
The outer door panels are decorated with mother of pearl, representing the fine craftsmanship at the court of King Rama I. The king had instructed the door panels to feature the supreme Hindu gods – Brahma on a swan and Narai on the Great Bird, Garuda – surrounded by mythological animals, with the guardians to protect the shrine from evil forces.



5. The gable

The gable over the doors feature the god Narai on Garuda, elaborately carved and decorated, resembling the gable at Wat Chanasongkhram in Bangkok.

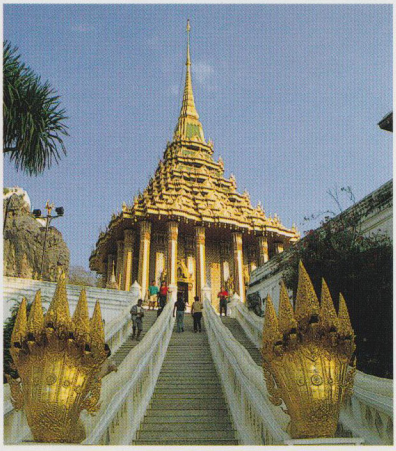
6. The silver mat

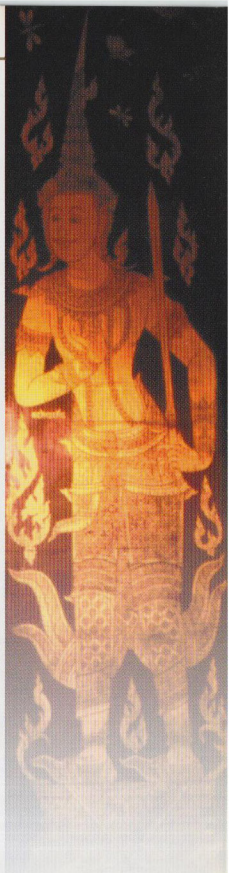


The original silver mat, a plain mat with raised border, was placed there by King Borommakot, but it was stolen by looters. The one seen at present was made in 1951 to replace the original one.

7. Naga staircases

The Naga (Great Serpent) staircases leading up to the shrine were originally found on the east and the north, with the serpent heads in bronze. The five-headed Naga was put up in the First Reign of the Bangkok Period. King Chulalongkorn, Rama V, added another staircase. The seven-headed Naga, all crowned, is believed to have been built in the Ayutthaya Period.





Objects of Worship and Art Objects

1. The Lord Buddha's Footprint

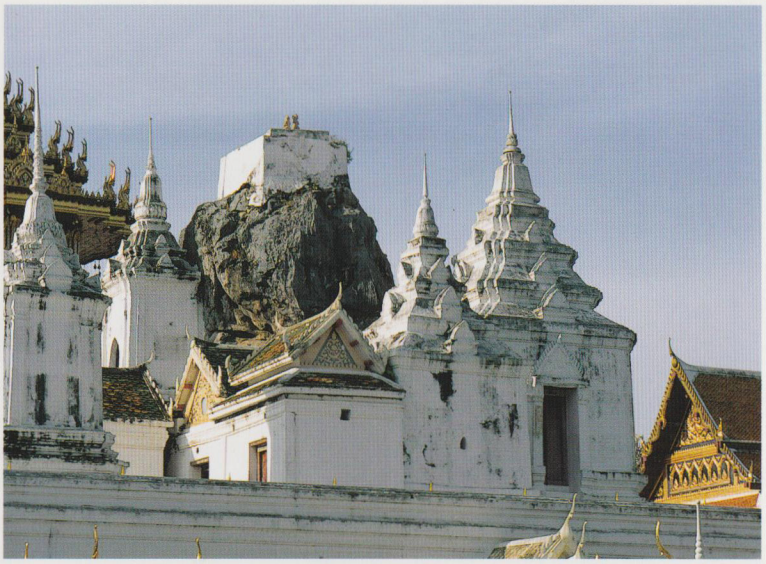
The Lord Buddha's Footprint is considered Thailand's most sacred religious monument; Thai monarchs since King Songtham of Ayutthaya, who discovered the shrine, have consistently committed resources to develop and maintain the site as the foremost place of worship. No other site in the kingdom has been accorded such prestige.

2. Guardians of the shrine

At the entrance to the holy shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint, stand two demons, as seen in the *khon* mask-play of the *Ramayana*, Thai version. They were originally made multi-faced demons; the present figures have been renovated in accordance with the original form and style.

3. Hanging bells

The surrounding outer wall of the *mondop* housing the Lord Buddha's Footprint features a long row of hanging bells for devotees to ring after paying tribute to the holy shrine and giving alms to the needy. For the latest renovation of the site, 72 ancient bells were selected to adorn the wall, to commemorate His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 72nd birthday anniversary.



4. The view of Khao Yon

Within the wall around the *phra mondop*, to the north, there is a small stone hedge called Khao Yon, topped by tiny pagodas of various models and sizes, with small halls built at the base, housing significant Buddha images in different postures, notably the Buddha Subduing Mara and the Pa Lelai posture (Buddha accepting offerings from an elephant and a monkey), as well as the Chinese-style figure Phra Sangkatchai and the hermit Satchaphand.

5. The hermit Satchaphand

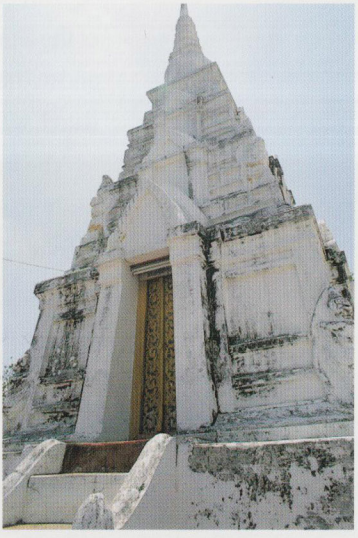
The hermit Satchaphand was said to be meditating at Suwannabanphot Hill, when the Lord Buddha came to the area and preached a sermon to him. The hermit was enlightened and asked to be ordained. His figure can be found in many places in the area.

6. The shrine of the god Kala

This shrine, built as a tiny pavilion at the back of the temple hall, houses six deities, four standing and two sitting. The original structure, badly dilapidated, was rebuilt in 1926.

The figurines are carved from sandstone, obviously made by craftsmen of the ancient Khmer Empire. They were discovered at the ancient city of Khit Khin, presently in the District of Ban Mo. They were moved to the Holy Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint in the reign of King Chulalongkorn, Rama V.

7. The Pagoda of the Holy Relic of Nakhon Phanom

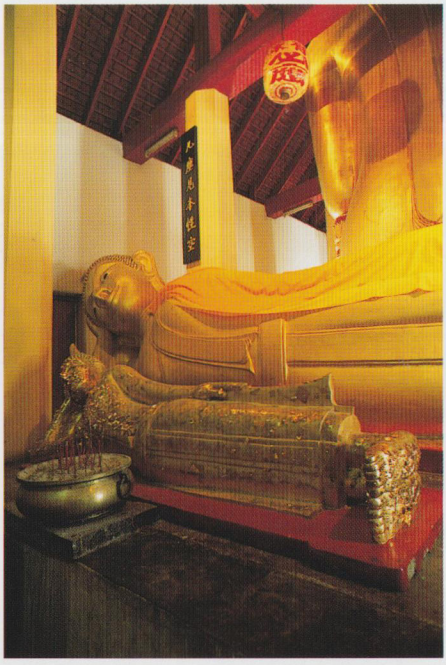


The pagoda, modelled after the revered Pagoda of the Holy Relic of Nakhon Phanom, is situated in front of the hall of the Buddha of Pa Lelai. The pagoda was built at the command of the viceroy of the Third Reign, out of his deep faith in this religious monument in the Northeast. On his way back from an expedition to Vientiane, he stopped to pay respect to the Lord Buddha's Footprint and dedicated all the paraphernalia brought by the royal army as tributes to the shrine. They are presently kept in the Phra Phutthabat Museum.

8. The Makutphan Pagoda

The Makutphan Pagoda was built at the command of King Mongkut, Rama IV, in 1850, made entirely of marble, to house a holy relic, located north of the *phra mondop*.

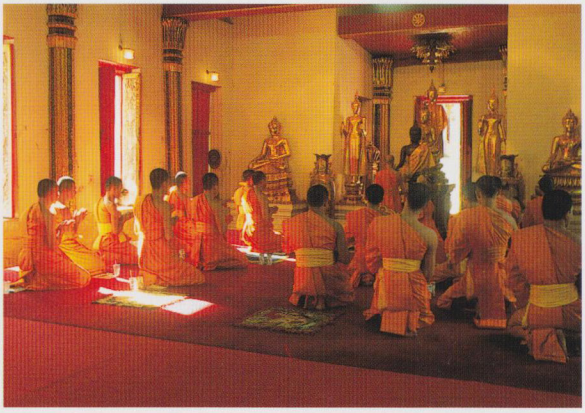
9. The Hall of the Buddha of Pa Lelai



The hall of the Buddha of Pa Lelai, in brick and stucco, was built to the south of the *phra mondop*. The door and window panels were elaborately carved and patterned, with a traditional Thai tile roof. It was built to house the Buddha image in the Pa Lelai posture, measuring 3.5 metres across the lap. The figure stands 9.5 metres tall, the aura included. There is also a reclining Buddha 6.2 metres in length, and other Buddha images in various postures. The hall was renovated with coloured glazed tiles to replace the old tiles in 1953.

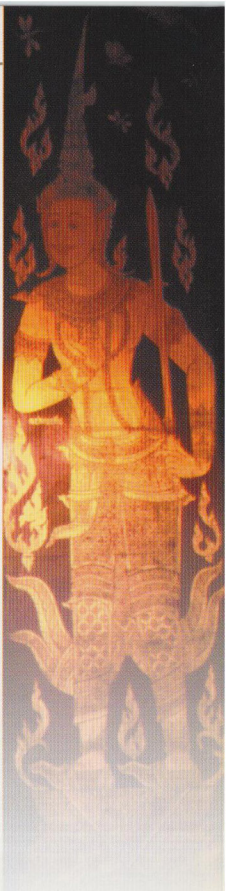
10. The Temple Hall of Wat Phra Phutthabat

Situated near the entrance guarded by demons, to the north, the temple hall was built in the reign of King Songtham. There are several Buddha images in the hall. The presiding Buddha is a standing Buddha in the Reflecting posture, a work of the Ayutthaya Period. A distinctive feature of the hall is the locating of the posts adjacent to the inner wall. The posts are elaborately made and decorated with gilded patterns and mirrors, whereas the walls are simply of plaster. The emblems of the first four reigns of Bangkok are featured on the doors and window panels. The door to the east features the traditional guardian known as Siew Kang, with a floral pattern. The temple hall has four doors (three entrances and one exit).



11. Three treasure halls

The treasure halls were built at three levels and called the Upper Treasure Hall, Middle Treasure Hall, and Lower Treasure Hall. They are brick and stucco Thai-style pavilions, with elaborate doors and windows. They were built in the reign of King Songtham of Ayutthaya. The most recent renovation and reconstruction took place in 1954. The Lower Treasure Hall is now known as the Chinese Hall, as Chinese rites have been performed there since 1927. Even now it is visited daily by large numbers of Buddhists from mainland China; the halls are busy with activities and the sound of firecrackers all day long.



12. The Sunset Royal Hall

The Sunset Royal Hall was originally the music hall, where musical bands from the royal court performed as tributes to the shrine. It was later remodelled as a royal pavilion for His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej in 1952, when he performed a ceremony to raise the top of the *mondop* to its current place.

13. The Hall of the Hermit

A figure of Satchaphand was placed in the hall, situated at the foot of the Pho Lanka Hill. The poles are in brick and stucco, with a traditional Thai tiled roof. People have a strong belief in the healing power of the hermit and bring their offerings on a daily basis.

14. The Flower Vase Pavilion

This tiny pavilion is where flower vases were placed by worshippers in the past. It is located at the foot of the Pho Lanka Hill to the south of

the Hall of Pa Lelai, built in brick and stucco with a traditional Thai tiled roof. It was renovated in 1953.

15. The Temple Hall of the Four Footprints

The temple hall was built in the Ayutthaya Period, next to the entrance used by the royal party. It is presumed to have been built in the reign of King Prasatthong. The Lord Buddha's Footprint was modelled in metal, as four footprints placed in layers, representing the first four Buddha: Kakusantha, Konagomana, Kassapa, and Gotama. Several Buddha images from Ayutthaya are displayed in the hall, along with figures of female monks and a stone pagoda brought from the Temple of the Emerald Buddha by the Venerable Phra Phutthacharn, who supervised the renovation of the shrine in the early Bangkok Period. At the festivals in the third and fourth lunar months, devotees pay tribute to the shrine and lift the elephant figure to pray for luck. The hall was renovated in the reign of King Rama I, and reconstructed, with the replacement of the roof tiles with glazed tiles, in 1954.

16. The Main Temple Hall, or Phra Phutthabat Museum

The main temple hall used to serve as temporary shelter for female members in the royal entourage. The hall houses artefacts and antiques, among which is a royal cloth presented to the shrine by King Narai the Great. Precious offerings are grouped and put on display.

The objects in the museum come under nine categories:

1. Precious items, such as gold and jewellery made into footprint models, and other items. They are placed in the middle, with steel panels and safety doors to protect them at all times.
2. Five-coloured chinaware
3. Lacquered and decorated items
4. Blue and white ware
5. Sangkhalok earthenware
6. Buddha images and amulets from different periods
7. Silver and gold trees
8. Royal belongings and paraphernalia
9. Mother-of-pearl inlaid items

There are also masks, dolls, animal figures, and other pieces. At present, the museum is open to the public during festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, and for special requests such as group visits.

17. The Royal Clothes-Changing Hall

Situated at the foot of the Naga staircase, the hall was simple in form but elaborately decorated in traditional Thai style. It was meant for the monarch to change his clothes before proceeding to pay homage to the shrine. The embroidered panels are known as the Wanthong Embroidered Panels, after the description in the well-known literature of the Ayutthaya Period.

The original purpose of the hall has since been abandoned, as the pilgrimage to the shrine is much easier than it used to be.

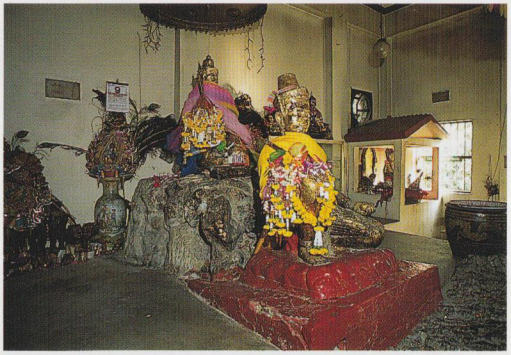
18. Pho Lanka Hill

Pho Lanka Hill is to the east of *phra mondop*. It is assumed to be the original Suwannabanphot Hill in the ancient chronicle. The name Pho Lanka Hill was later acquired with the planting of the auspicious bodhi tree from Sri Lanka. Pagodas of various types and sizes are found on the hill, with one prominently situated on top as a landmark for the Holy Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint that can be seen from afar. Several temple halls were built on the slopes.

19. Model of the Buddha's silhouette

The model of the Buddha's silhouette imitates the cliff marks of Phra Phutthachai Chamlong. It is on the stone cliff on the east slope of Pho Lanka Hill, with trekking paths leading up and down from a small hall. A large number of worshippers visit the site during festivals.

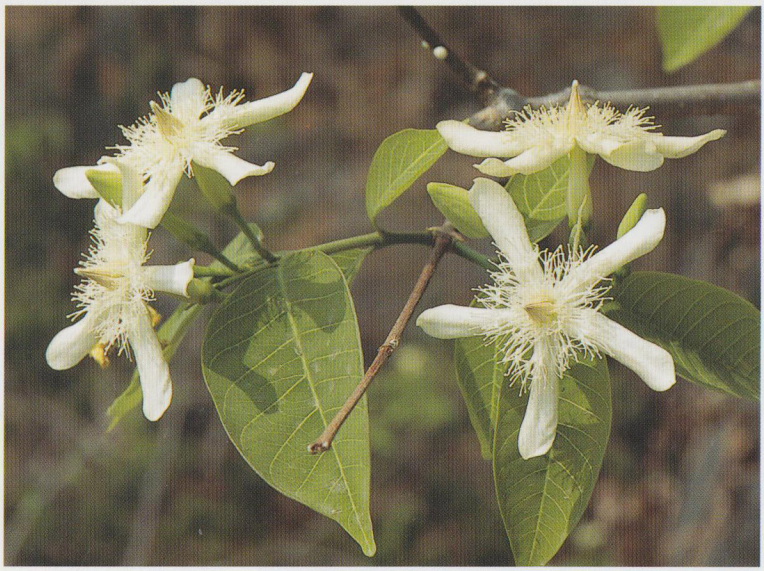
20. The Shrine of the Deity of Khao Tok

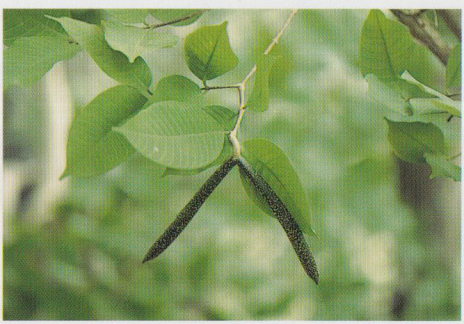


This shrine was constructed during the Ayutthaya Period, for the spirit of the holy place. The original shrine was destroyed by wild fire. Reconstruction was carried out in subsequent periods. King Mongkut, Rama IV, had a figure of the deity made, carved in stone. A fire damaged the stone figure, and King Chulalongkorn, Rama V, had a figure of a heavenly being in full royal costume made.

The shrine was reconstructed in 1949. It is considered a sacred site for worshippers, who come to pay tribute to the deity in great numbers each day. A foundation was set up in the name of the deity for local charities and the promotion of art and culture.

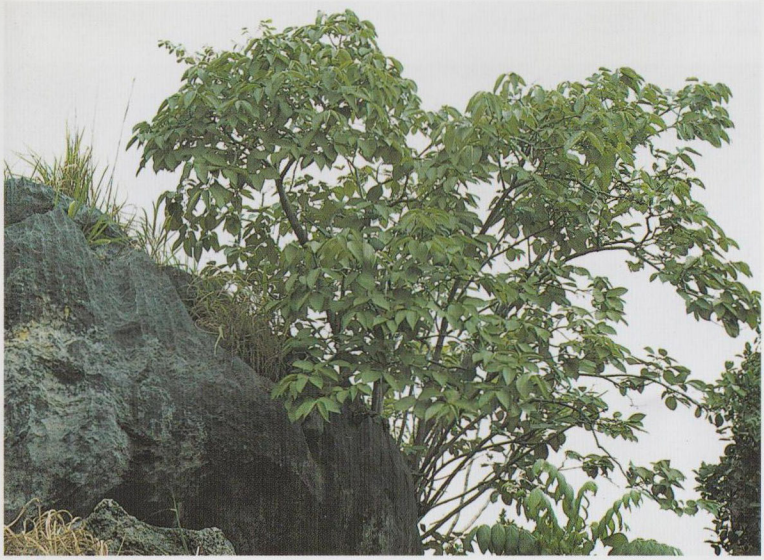
21. Queen's *Apocynaceae wrightia*





Queen's *Apocynaceae wrightia* was discovered by Professor Dr. Thawatchai Santisuk, an expert in plant species surveying and classification in the Royal Forest Department, while on a survey of limestone hills in February 2001. Dr. D.J. Middleton, an expert in *Apocynaceae* from Harvard University, confirmed that the *Apocynaceae wrightia* was a new species, with unique features and beautiful flowers. It was described as an endemic species, found only in Thailand, and is considered a rare and endangered plant species.

The Royal Forest Department thus asked for royal permission to name this *Apocynaceae wrightia* in honour of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, for her support and initiatives in the conservation of biodiversity in the country, as "Wrightia Sirikitiae Mid. and Santisuk". It was the first native plant species to be named in honour of Her Majesty the Queen.



Queen's *Apocynaceae wrightia* is a fairly large shrub or small tree, deciduous, about 4 to 6 metres in height. Thick white sap can be drawn from all parts of the tree. The bark is light brownish in colour. Leaves are single, in opposites and in pairs, with dark veins and fine hairs. Flowers are white, with a gentle, sweet aroma. The pods consist of two follicles that are thin and long. The ripe pods open along the seams, containing numerous seeds.

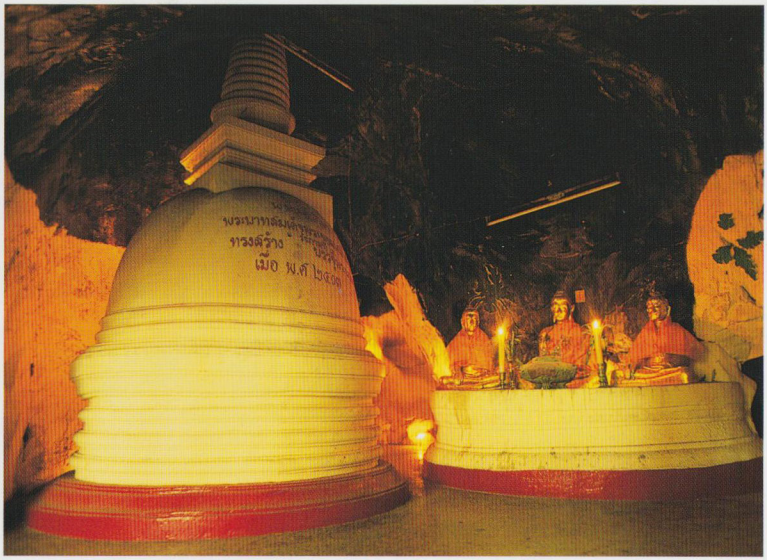
Queen's *Apocynaceae wrightia* has been found sparsely scattered in the crevices of the limestone hills around Wat Phra Phutthabat in Saraburi.

The Royal Forest Department has been propagating the species, to be distributed to the people in the future.

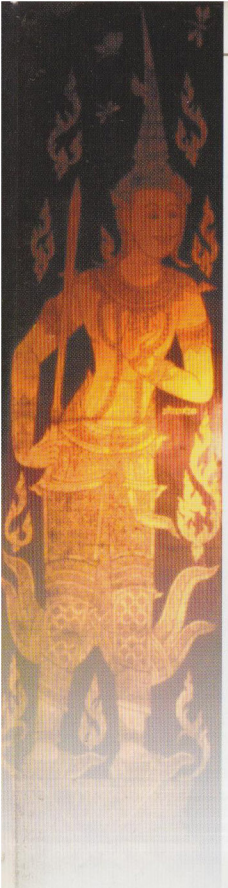
22. The Hunter's Cleansing Pond

The pond is located one kilometre from Wat Phra Phutthabat. It is believed to be the original pond where Boon, a local hunter who discovered the Lord Buddha's Footprint, washed his animals. There is a little well with a tiny hole, always filled with water. The hole was believed to have been made by Boon's spear. Devout Buddhists regard the water as auspicious, with healing power.

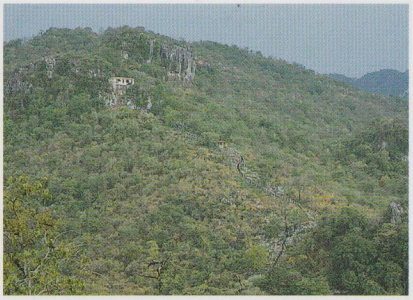
23. Prathun Cave



Prathun Cave is situated to the east of Wat Phra Phutthabat, about one kilometre from the shrine. The cave is shaped like the roof of a barge. There is a Chinese temple at the entrance of the cave, with several Thai and Chinese Buddha images enshrined. It also serves as the welfare centre for senior citizens of Chinese descent. The cave has three chambers, linked to one another. A large Chinese-style Buddha was erected on the north, and numerous Thai and Chinese Buddha images line the central part, with a stone pagoda brought in from China and put up by King Mongkut, Rama IV, at the south end of the cave.



24. Sage Hill



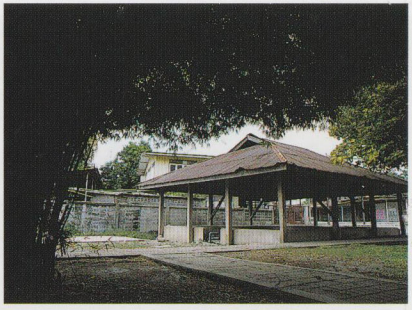
About one kilometre from Wat Phra Phutthabat, Sage Hill provides visitors an opportunity to view the entire place from various heights; 760 steps in concrete were made for climbers, and Chinese-style pavilions were built at intervals. The hill was originally called Elephant Hill ; the name was later changed to Sage Hill with the introduction of the figures of seven sages.

25. Ancient waterways

Traces of streams and water channels from the past, mentioned in historical records as Than Kasem (the Stream of Delight), Than Thongdaeng (the Stream of Copper), and Khlong Ob (the Enclosing Canal), are located close to the ancient community next to Wat Phra Phutthabat.

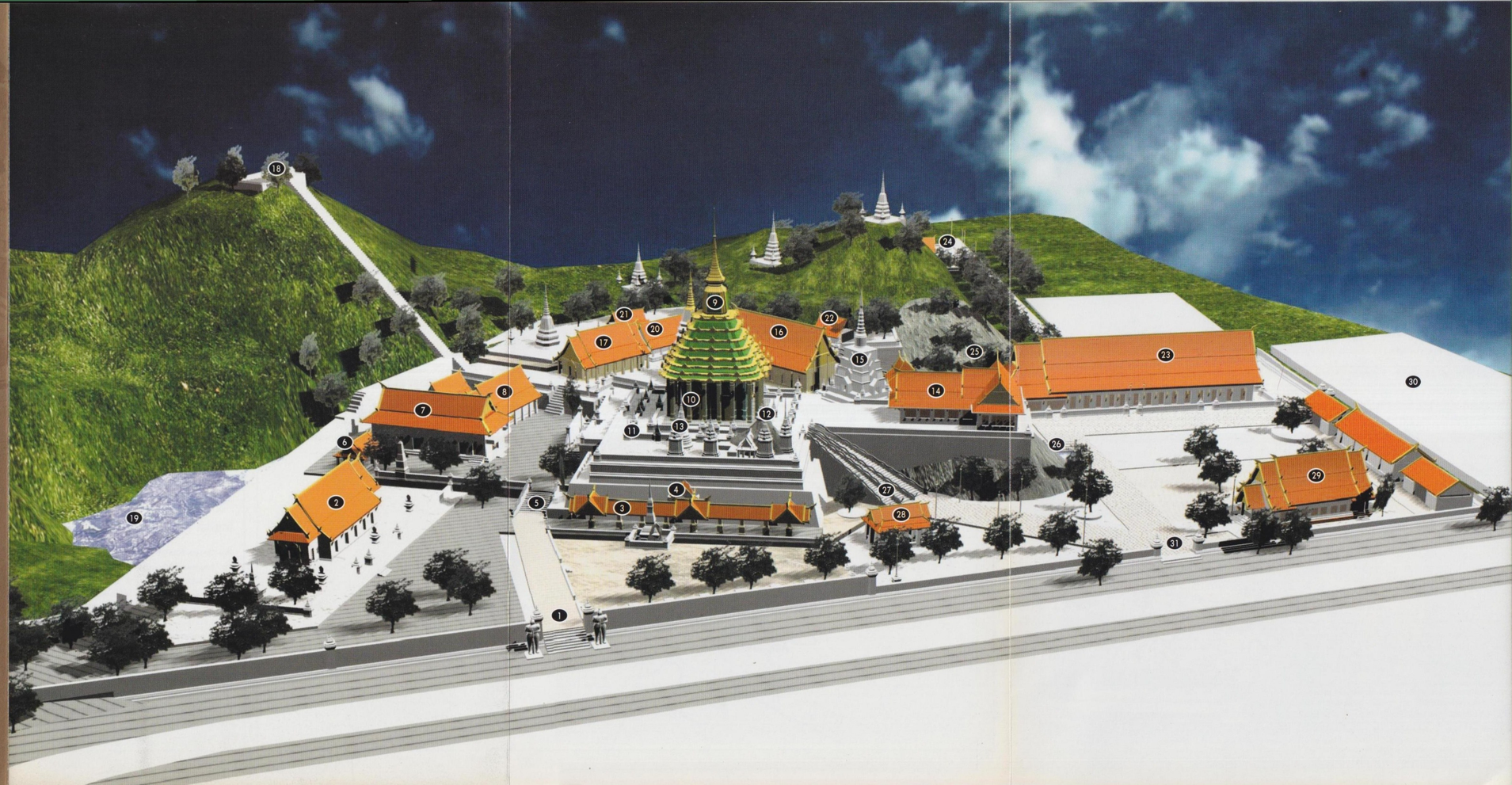
26. Bo Phong

Bo Phong comprises three eternal wells, at the entrance to Wat Phra Phutthabat.

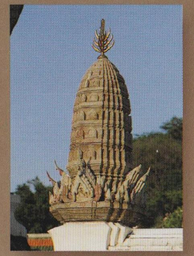


The Palace-topped Structure and Its Compound

1. The Demon-guarded Entrance
2. The Temple Hall
3. The Hanging Bells
4. The Hermit Satchaphand
5. The 7-Headed Naga Staircase
6. The Shrine of the God Kala
7. The Lower Treasure Hall or the Chinese Hall
8. The Middle Treasure Hall
9. The Palace Top
10. The Lord Buddha's Footprint, Silver Mat, Mother-of-Pearl Inlaid Door, the Busabok
11. The Auspicious Walls
12. Khao Yon
13. The Makutphand Pagoda
14. The Sunset Royal Hall
15. The Pagoda of the Holy Relic of Nakhon Phanom
16. The Hall of the Buddha of Pa Lelai(The Big Buddha)
17. The Upper Treasure Hall
18. The Suwannabanphot Hill (Pho Lanka Hill)
19. Ang Kaew—The Auspicious Well
20. The Healing Hermit
21. The Model Hermit Figure
22. The Flower Vase Pavilion
23. The 16-Chamber Main Temple Hall—The Phra Phutthabat Museum
24. Memorial to King Songtham
25. The Frog Cave, Phra Buddha Chinarat
26. Elephant-Head Pond
27. The three-way five-headed Naga Staircases
28. The Royal Clothe-Changing Hall
29. The Temple Hall of the Four Footprints
30. The Tai Pikun Palace
31. The Royal Entrance

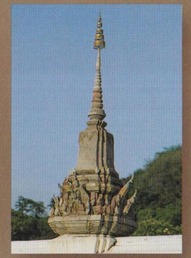


7.The Decorative Pattern of Brahma God's Bow and Arrow

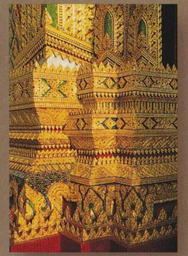


10.The Khmer-style stupa on the upper level to the south

8.The lintel over the front door of the palace-topped structure

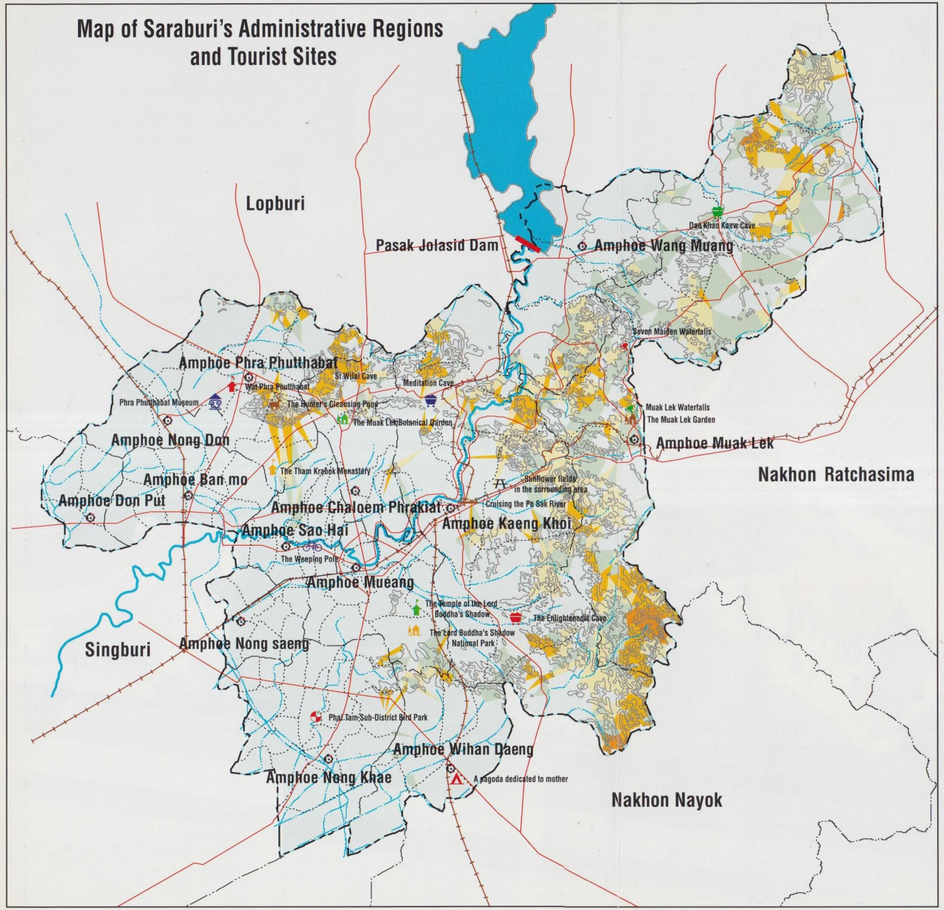


11.The pagoda top on the upper level to the south



9.Lion-footed pedestal

12. Double lintel



Legends

Defining lines

- Provincial area
- District area

Waterways

- Pa Sak River
- Temporary channel

Communication lines

- Hard - pressed wide roads All-year-round usable road
- Railway

Undulation line

- Undulation range

Geographical feature

- Flat land at 60 - 100 meters (above mean sea level)
- Flat land at 100 - 200 meters
- Elevation at 200 - 300 meters
- Elevation at 400-600 meters
- Mountainous area at 700 - 800 meters

Tourist sites

- Cruising the Pa Sak River
- A pagoda dedicated to mother
- Dao Khao Kaew Cave
- Meditation Cave
- The Enlightenedis Cave
- Si Wilai Cave
- Seven Maiden Waterfalls
- Muak Lek Waterfalls
- The Hunteris Cleansing Pond
- Phra Phutthabat Museum
- The Muak Lek Garden
- The Muak Lek Botanical Garden
- The Lord Buddhais Shadow National
- The Temple of the Lord Buddha's Shadow
- Wat Phra Phutthabat
- The Tham Krabok Monastery
- The Weeping Pole
- Phai Tam Sub-District Bird Park
- Sunflower fields in the surrounding area

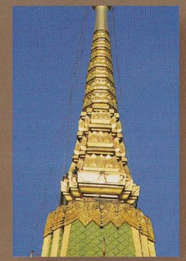
3000 3000 6000 9000

Scale 1 : 500,000

Decorative items of the Mondop

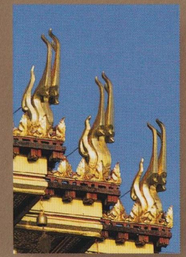
1.The royal crown over the lotus - bud top

4.The Naga gable beam

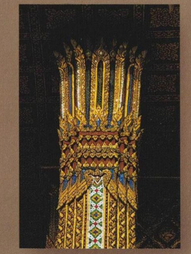


2.The Busabok

5.The eaves in modified-corner style

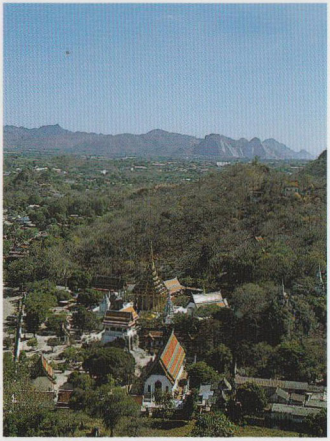


3.The group of Naga gable beams



6.The lotus capital pillar

The District of Phra Phutthabat
A place with great value in arts and culture



On 6 June 1956, a royal decree was announced, upgrading the subdistrict of Phra Phutthabat into the district of Phra Phutthabat, with the following ancient monuments registered by the Fine Arts Department as places of study and tourism:

Khun Khlon Subdistrict

The site of Wat Phra Phutthabat :-

1. The Holy Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint

2. The ancient palace (Tai Pikun Palace) and ruins

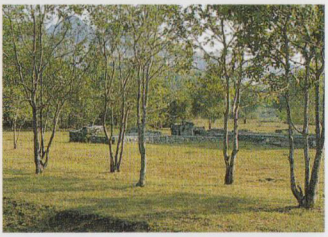
3. Traces of an ancient irrigation system, Si Thanonchai Dam

4. Than Thongdaeng and the dam

5. Than Kasem Royal Hall and the royal landing

6. The Royal Hall of Sa Yo and the royal landing

7. Viman Chakri Cave, with King Chulalongkorn's symbol on the cave wall



8. Prathun Cave, the pagoda, the Buddha images, the model of the Buddha's silhouette

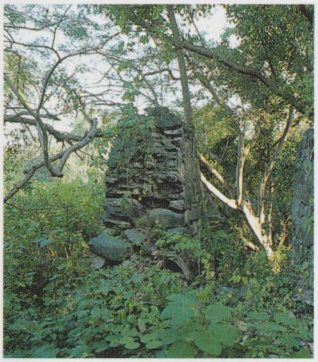
9. Rakang Cave and stone Buddha images

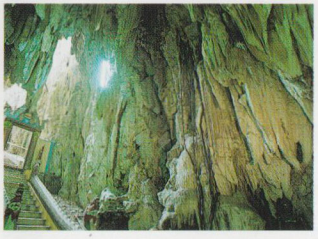
10. Maha Sanuk Cave, with deities in plaster, a Chinese-style Buddha image, Sangkatchai, and King Chulalongkorn's symbol above the entrance to the cave

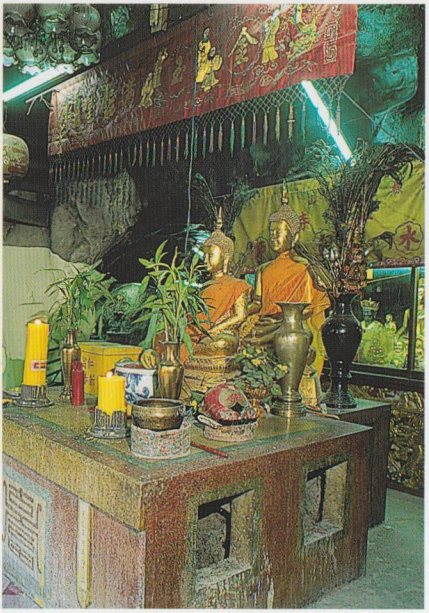
11. The Shrine of the Deity of Khao Tok, with figurines

Phu Krang Subdistrict

12. The Phrabatyai Cave, with the Lord Buddha's Footprint in sandstone, parts of sandstone Buddha images, haut-relief stone carvings, in the figure of

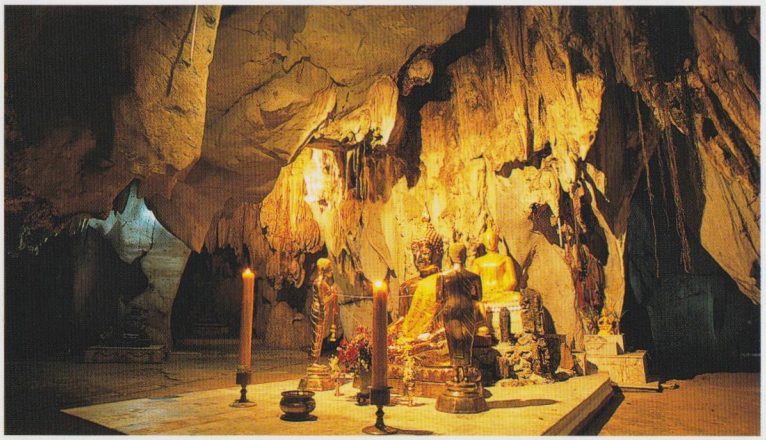






a person riding a swan (damaged)

All 12 ancient monuments are maintained by local volunteers and Methavi Vithayakom School.



Communities in the Neighbourhood of Wat Phra Phutthabat

Visitors who spend time at Wat Phra Phutthabat should take the opportunity to observe and recognize the unique lifestyle of communities in the neighbourhood of Wat Phra Phutthabat.

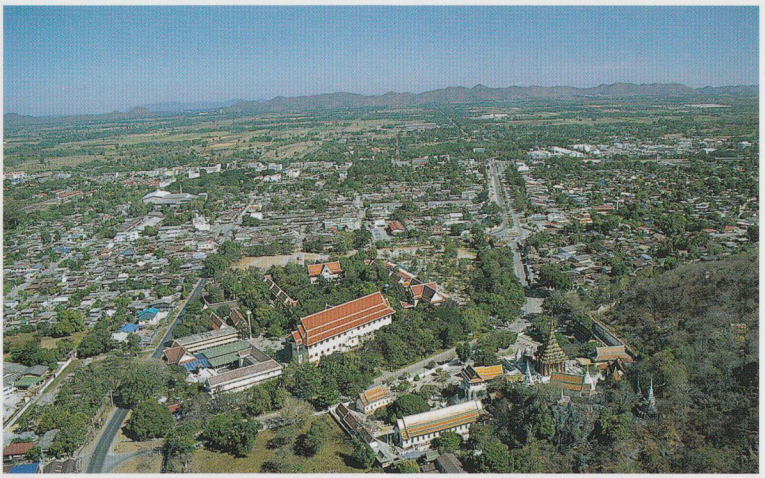
Because Wat Phra Phutthabat covers an area of over 2,800 acres, government offices, the Phra Phutthabat District Office, Phra Phutthabat Sub-district Municipality Office, companies, shops, and homes are all situated in the Wat Phra Phutthabat area.

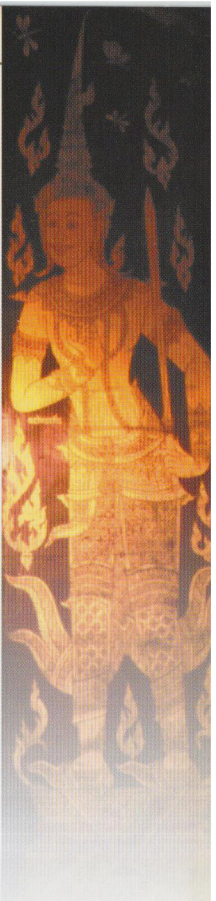
There are altogether 25 communities:

Ruam Chai Pattana
Nanthapanya
Tai Pikun I
Tai Pikun II
Pracha Bamrung
Si Raksa
Phantha Khiri
Kumbhakan Thot Nam
Intharaksa Samakkhi
Khun Khlon Pattana
Ratchaphruek
Yukonthon
Khun Khlon Samakkhi
P. Garden
Mueang Thong
Nantphitak
Village 3 Khun Khlon
Khao Ngern
Sisuk Pattana
Lang Rong Phayaban
Than Thongdaeng
Sap Cha-om
Asa Pattana
Village 5 Phra Phutthabat
Huey Chan

Community members usually follow a simple lifestyle, with housewives' groups, senior groups, merchants' groups, and the like formed to carry out community work and other activities. They are engaged in trade, government service, and agriculture.

Tai Pikun I and Tai Pikun II produce the walking sticks that have been identified with the Phra Phutthabat area since ancient times.





Asa Pattana, Sap Cha-om, Khun Khlon Samakkhi, and Khun Khlon Pattana specialize in garments and dressmaking.

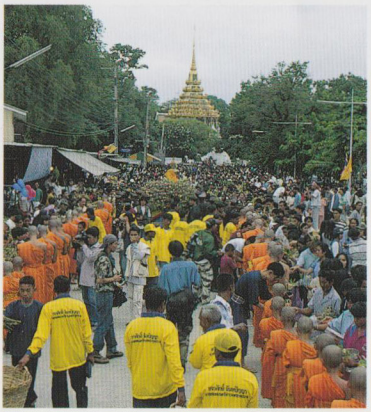
Yukonthon and Village 3 Khun Khlon make Chinese buns, bread, and pastry.

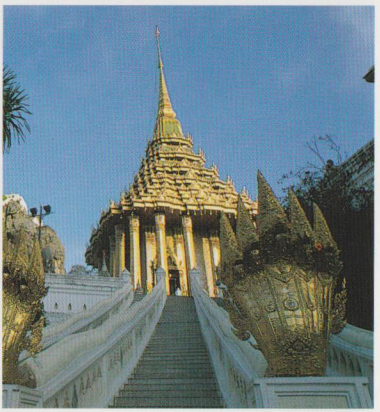
Ratchaphruek has expertise in Chinese set meals.

Such products are complementary to the attraction that has no parallel, the Holy Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint, which is of the highest value in all aspects.

It is reassuring, however, to know that there are products and local food to enjoy and to buy as souvenirs for one's friends at home. Communities around Wat Phra Phutthabat are determined to impress visitors with their hospitality and their labour of love.

Travel Tips for Wat Phra Phutthabat





Wat Phra Phutthabat is located about one kilometre from Phahonyothin Road, and it is open to visitors everyday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Foreign visitors are requested to buy tickets at 30 baht each. Everyone is asked to dress properly. Women are asked not to wear shorts or sleeveless blouses on the premises.

There are traditional events at the shrine, regularly organized for Buddhists:

1. Offerings of uncooked rice and dry food to Buddhist monks, on New Year's Day each year, in front of Phra Phutthabat District Office
2. Paying Homage to the Holy Shrine of the Lord Buddha's Footprint, scheduled around Chinese New Year, around February and March
3. The Procession of the Holy Tooth Relic at Wat Phra Phutthabat, on the seventh day of the waxing moon of the fourth lunar month every year
4. Songkran Festival, on April 13 each year at Wat Phra Phutthabat
5. The Royal Songkran Festival, in May, performed at the Lord Buddha's Footprint, the Buddha image at Viman Chakri Cave, the museum, and the Big Buddha at Prathun Cave
6. Procession of the royally granted Lent candle and the presentation of the candle at Wat Phra Phutthabat

7. Floral offerings to Buddhist monks, at the commencement of the Buddhist Lent

8. Presentation of the royal *kathin* robes, in October each year at the Temple Hall of Wat Phra Phutthabat

9. Loy Krathong Festival, around November, at Kumphakan Thot Nam Dam

Wat Phra Phutthabat has provided facilities and amenities for tourists and visitors, including dormitories, the old vegetarian building, and the new vegetarian building, with about 120 rooms, bathrooms, and lavatories – about 150 units in total.

During festivals, Wat Phra Phutthabat extends its opening hours from 6:00 a.m. until midnight.

Wat Phra Phutthabat has volunteers in the Good Hosts Programme. They are both adults and youngsters, working during weekends and holidays, as friendly guides to give information to visitors. Visitors can reserve the service in advance. Miss Surayanee Rerkpoonthaveeporn, a native of the area, initiated the programme to perpetuate the appreciation of the holy shrine and to impress visitors at the same time.

To travel to Wat Phra Phutthabat, there are regular buses and air-conditioned buses No. 1 and No. 2.

Dos and Don'ts for Visitors

Buddhists and non-Buddhists should act with due respect at religious sites, where religious activities are conducted. Proper dress is required; clothing can be local textiles and costumes, or well-made clothing that is suitable for the occasion. Women should avoid wearing shorts or sleeveless blouses. Normally, shoes are removed as one enters a holy place (shoe racks are provided). The mats for Buddhist monks are reserved for the monks' use.

Visitors to Wat Phra Phutthabat should bear in mind the following:

1. Dress properly.
2. Read instructions at each shrine and museum and observe the rules.
3. Take off shoes and put them in the provided place.
4. When entering a site of religious activities, keep calm and quiet.
5. Show respect to the place of worship, by taking off hats, putting down umbrellas, and so forth.
6. Pay respect in accordance with one's own beliefs. Refrain from looking down upon other faiths and acting with rude manners.
7. Help conserve the natural and cultural heritages, with no littering, no graffiti writing, no smoking, and no spitting, to help keep the places clean and in good order. Photographs may be taken only in permitted places.
8. Refrain from unbecoming actions such as embracing in religious places.
9. Do not take alcohol or other intoxicants; no rough words or quarrelling.
10. Enjoy the peacefulness and observe the proper customs of the place.
11. Be conscious of the safety of life and property at all times.

The Buddha image represents the Lord Buddha himself. Buddhists pay deep respect to such objects and sites of worship. Photographing is sometimes not allowed.

Buddhist monks are likewise the representatives of the Lord Buddha. They should be treated with due respect.

Men are allowed to touch Buddhist monks, if it is done properly and with respect. But women are forbidden to come into close contact with or to touch monks and novices.

The temple, meanwhile, is a place of worship, the repository of culture, tradition, and social values. It is advisable to observe closely the correct practice in Buddhist temples.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand, the Fine Arts Department, the Province of Saraburi, the Office of Community Development in Saraburi Province, and the Office of Public Relations in Saraburi Province ask for your kind cooperation and thank you for your consideration.

Advisors

Venerable Phra Thep Pariyatmolee	Lord Abbot of Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan
Venerable Phra Khru Pisalthammakosit	Assistant to the Lord Abbot of Wat Phra Phutthabat
Mr. Narin Panichkit	Governor of Saraburi
Mr. Cherdsak Wongwattana	Deputy Governor of Saraburi

Budget

Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan

Sources

The book *Wat Phra Phutthabat*
Venerable Phra Khru Pisalthammakosit
Mr. Boonlert Senanon
Mr. Witthaya Kingkaew

Committee

Venerable Phra Khru Voraphutthaphiban	Assistant to the Lord Abbot of Wat Phra Phutthabat	Advisor
Venerable Phra Khru Pisalthammakosit	Assistant to the Lord Abbot of Wat Phra Phutthabat	Advisor
Mr. Rapee Phongbupakitcha	District Chief Officer of Phra Phutthabat	Chairman
Mr. Somjit Kotcharit		Member
Mr. Boonsom Saiyud		Member
Mr. Boonlert Senanon		Member
Mr. Amnuay Pannouy		Member and Secretary
Miss Surayanee Rerkpooltaweeporn		Member and Assistant Secretary

Working Party

Mr. Boonlert Senanon
Mr. Amnuay Pannouy
Miss Surayanee Rerkpooltaweeporn

The National Library, Ministry of Education
Public Relations Office, Saraburi Province
Office of Community Development, Saraburi Province

Pictures

Mr. Surajit Jamornman
Mr. Supachai Laokularak
Mr. Nanthapat Surasingtothong

Mr. Piyachart Traisansri
Mr. Kritsakorn Charoenpanich
Miss Yathanee Jengbampengthan

Designed and Computer Graphic

Photo Square Co., Ltd. Tel. 0-2969-5879
Mr. Chidchanok Daengsophon

Translator

Mrs. Amporn Samosorn

Proofreader

Mr. Rick Whisenand
Mrs. Janya Serttikul

Mrs. Somsri Jamornman
Mrs. Chanthima Srithongin

Coordinating Centre

The Lord Abbot of Wat Phra Phutthabat
Wat Phra Phutthabat Ratchavoramahavihan
Khun Khlon Subdistrict, Phra Phutthabat District, Saraburi Province 18120
Tel. 0-3626-6185, 0-3626-6025, 0-3632-1972

First edition 20,000 copies
September 2002
Printed at Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Company Limited
ISBN 974-514-131-3

Guide book **Wat Phra Phutthabat** Saraburi Province